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Studies in the Napoleonic Wars

BY SIR CHARLES OMAN

M. P., K. B. E., D. C. L.

In this book by one of the most famous living historians is material of the greatest interest to the student of military history, to the reader of war books, and to those who care for romantic truth that is stranger than fiction.

The seeker after adventure will find here four thrilling tales of secret service during the Napoleonic era and the exciting journal of an English officer taken prisoner at the battle of Albuera in the Peninsular War; the reader of war books will enjoy the masterly description of the forgotten battle of Maida, when British troops faced Frenchmen on the soil of Italy and demonstrated the superiority of the "thin red line" over the massed French columns; and the tale of the history-making conflict on the shores of the Niagara River that brought death to the British commander and saved Canada to the Crown.

Here for those interested in military annals are accounts of Napoleon's cavalry, its organization, equipment, and leading engagements, a penetrating study of the great tactical problem of Napoleonic days—"Column versus Line"—and a vigorous paper in defense of military history.

There is also an illuminating study of the Duke of Wellington as Prime Minister and the reasons that made the victor of Waterloo an unlucky adventurer in politics.

The writer has vitalized the dry statistics on which much of his material is based, and the whole volume will be of unflagging interest to the intelligent reader.

STUDIES IN THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

BY

SIR CHARLES OMAN

M.P., K.B.E.

CHICHELE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

WITH FOUR MAPS

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PREFACE

THE first of the thirteen papers included in this volume differs in character from the rest, being a general summary of the views on the history of the world held by various historians from Herodotus and Orosius down to the Whigs of the XIXth century, with my own modest conclusions subjoined.

The other twelve papers are by-products from much work on the Napoleonic period on which I have been engaged for the last twenty years. The four stories of Secret Service will, I think, be new to most readers: they illustrate in different fashions the underworld of political and military intrigue which escapes notice in general histories. All the four heroes of these tales are personages well worthy of inspection; all were bold and ready-witted; two of them—Robertson and Colquhoun Grant—show a delightful fund of humour in their narratives of their doings. The papers on Maida and on "Column and Line" are the results of study of British tactics before the Peninsular War, necessary for a comprehension of Wellington's methods of warfare. The discussion of Napoleon's system of using his cavalry is a generalization from the whole period of the campaigns of 1800–15, into which I was led while endeavouring to discover the basic ideas which lay below the handling of cavalry by his generals in the Spanish War.

Seven of these papers have never been in print before. For the others I have to acknowledge the kind permission of the Editor of *Blackwood* to use again "General Brock" and "A Prisoner of Albuera", of Messrs. Macmillan for the reprinting of "Wellington as Prime Minister", of the Editors of the *Royal Artillery Journal* for the reproduction of "Maida", and of the Council of the British Academy for that of "Column and Line". "Historical Perspective" was a Creighton Lecture delivered before the University of London, and "A Defence of Military History" was written at the request of Sir George Aston for a Congress at the Institute of Historical Research.

C. OMAN

OXFORD
January 28, 1929

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STUDIES IN THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

I

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: MAN'S OUTLOOK ON HISTORY

THE moment that man begins to think about something more than the passing trifles and troubles of his daily life, and starts, consciously or unconsciously, to make generalizations about himself and his neighbours, their ends and objects, their past and future, he has begun to look at things in perspective. And when he extends his survey so as to draw deductions from all that he knows about the past records of mankind, he is trying to look at the world in *historical* perspective. It may be that his survey extends over no greater space of time than a generation or two—"Tales of a Grandfather" may be the limit of his knowledge. Or, on the other hand, he may know—or may think that he knows—the whole history of mankind since the Creation—if he ties himself down to the idea of a Creation—down to the all-important present day. Such was the happy conviction of Orosius in A.D. 417, and of Mr. H. G. Wells in A.D. 1925. But whether his horizon of knowledge be long or short, whether it be a hundred years or a hundred aeons, the man who has started to generalize about his own position in universal history is constructing for himself an historical perspective.

What are the things that determine a man's outlook on the past and the future? I do not mean only the outlook that the historian (or would-be historian) takes, but the

conceptions that governed the mind of the average man of various epochs down to our own day. It must be remembered that there are sharp breaks in the history of human thought concerning the past and the future, consequent on outward happenings in some cases, and on mental and spiritual changes in others. The conception of world-history was wholly different for a Roman of the reign of Augustus and a Roman of the reign of Honorius—but was the change more due to the collapse of the Empire under the Barbarian Invasions, or to the triumph of the Christian over the old official Pagan ideal? Or again, the outlook of an ordinarily intelligent Frenchman, Englishman, or German in 1450 was completely different from that of his great-grandson in 1600—but was that the result of the complex cultural changes which (for want of a better word) we call the Renaissance, and of the discovery of America and the Indies, and of countless advances in science? Or was it, in the main, the result of that great spiritual phenomenon which (again for want of a better word) we call the Reformation?

It is well worth while to take into consideration what are the main things that have governed man's conception of the progress of events, and the way that such conception governs his conduct in his own day. The beginnings of unconscious historical perspective came early; we may trace them in Homer and Hesiod and the Pentateuch, even in the surviving scraps of Assyrian and Egyptian records. A hint that an impious and tyrannical king "who does not that which is right in the sight of the Lord" means a ruined people, or that civil wars are deplorable, or that a corrupt oligarchy ends in a revolution, may be "glimpses of the obvious"; but historical perspective is beginning when the poet or the scribe or the annalist sets down such things as accepted facts, and applies them as warnings to the polities of his own day. Presently we reach the stage when the scribe works these observed phenomena into a little constitutional essay, as does Herodotus when—under the easy fiction of a debate

among seven Persian nobles on forms of government—he discusses the advantages and disadvantages of oligarchy, democracy, and monarchy. Here historical perspective has ripened into definite promulgation of doctrine. And Herodotus is only a hundred years distant from Aristotle, who was able to set forth the doctrine of the rise, progress, and decay of states (of all kinds) with a perfection of judgement that none of his successors in the sphere of political philosophy has ever surpassed. Though moderns like Montesquieu or Lord Bryce have had the advantage of a survey of two thousand more years of history than was granted to the ancient Stagirite, it cannot be said that they have added very much to his theory, or refuted any of the more important of his generalizations. And it astonishes us when we reflect that between his thought and ours there lie many centuries of the Roman Empire, in which the problems of democracy, on which he pondered so much, had become out of date, and still more centuries of the Dark Ages, in which constitutional history had harked back to that primitive contest between aristocracy and monarchy which recalled struggles that had ended in Greece three hundred years before Aristotle's day.

But we are concerned not so much with the outlook on the records of mankind that is found in the works of Aristotle, or Dante, or Bacon, or Montesquieu, or Lord Bryce, or any other master mind, as with the generalizations of the man in the street—the average intelligent member of society in one age or another. Herodotus, Livy, Orosius, the authors of the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, Lamartine, or Sir Archibald Alison are the sort of people who give the best evidence as to the historical perspective of their own day.

History, apart from primitive epics and folk-lore tales, starts with the chronicler; and the chronicler is too often annalistic and barren in his first efforts. He tells us without further comment that "Elon the Zebulonite judged Israel for ten years and died, and was buried in Aijalon in the Country of Zebulon"; or observes, as does the author of

the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, "in the year 773 a fiery cross appeared in the heaven after sunset, and wondrous adders were seen in the land of the South Saxons"—which is interesting but not very informative. But the second stage of chronicling, in which notes and remarks begin to be appended to the plain record of events, is not long in coming. Historical perspective has begun when to the bald annalistic record of an unhappy king we find added that "he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin"; and it is still clearer when the Anglo-Saxon chronicler, shaking off his accustomed brevity, bursts out in indignation against the wickedness of his own day. "The Earth bears no corn; you might as well have tilled the sea: the land is all ruined by evil deeds, and it is said openly that Christ and His saints are asleep." Such comments imply the beginning of reasoning and judgement; the annalist is making himself the exponent of the thought of his nation, and expresses his opinion as to the consequences of a political policy, or a moral degeneracy, of which he disapproves. The individual has begun to generalize on the aspect of his own time, and presently he will do the same on the aspect of times past and even of times to come. For a consideration of to-day involves in comparison a consideration of yesterday, and probably of to-morrow; and when a man begins consciously to compare yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow he is constructing for himself an historical perspective. It may be only the perspective of his own nation, or even of his own city, or quite possibly of no more than his own class or caste within that nation or city—Hesiod, Theognis, Aristophanes, Juvenal, had all got class or race perspectives, not general ones. Or he may have a world-perspective like Orosius, or Jean Jacques Rousseau, or Karl Marx, or Mr. H. G. Wells, but a perspective entirely settled and circumscribed by his personal predispositions and theories, rather than by true and unprejudiced survey of all the historical evidence that is available for him. And therefore,

in endeavouring to arrive at the historical perspective of any age or period, we must (as I said before) be careful not to take the exceptional man as necessarily the best representative of public opinion, when he sets forth his judgements, and the comparison of his own surroundings with those of previous generations or centuries.

The judgement of the man who moralizes on history may be either Optimistic or Pessimistic: which it may be is settled either by the atmosphere of the moment—the thinker's nation or class or religion may be faring well or faring ill—or by his personal mentality and character. For there have been Optimists in dark ages and Pessimists in times of prosperity.

On the whole Pessimism is the more ancient and universal creed. Impressed by the tales told us by respected grandfathers, most men have been prone to think (with Horace or Hesiod) that they are themselves a degenerate race. All over the world nations have been content to believe in the "Good Old Times", the "Golden Age", which has been lost owing to the perversity of the younger generation. Our ancestors were divine or semi-divine. They walked the earth thirty feet high like the Moses of the Talmud, they lived three hundred, four hundred, seven hundred years. They could, like Homer's Hector, lift a stone which scarce two of the strongest of modern men straining hard could tear from the soil. They bestrode elephants and used palm-trees as walking-sticks. And the earth on which they dwelt was a more genial clime than ours, which produced three harvests a year, and flowed with milk and honey. By some ancestral fault—because Adam and Eve ate the bitter apple of knowledge, or because Pandora opened the fatal box of plagues and diseases, evil finally came upon the human race, and progressive decay has been its lot. Hesiod formalized the conception for the Western World into the scheme of the Five Ages, each worse than that which preceded it, till mankind had slipped from the Golden Age through those of silver and bronze into the age of iron, in which his own unhappy

lot was cast. Passed on by Greece to Rome, and by Rome to the Middle Ages, the conception was as popular fifteen centuries after Christ as it had been ten centuries before his birth. And the more pessimistic spirits finished it off with the *Septima Aetas Mundi*, which was to see Antichrist, the destruction of the world, and the Last Judgement—all due in a very few years. For men, it was said, have grown steadily worse: and each particular generation thinks that its own particular faults are so startling that retribution must come without delay.

This conception of mankind as a dwindling race, doomed to a merited extinction, might be considered as a fit product of the most gloomy and sin-burdened ascetics of the Middle Ages. But it is much older than medieval Christianity: the Greeks had the same idea; so had Buddha, who considered the world of matter a hostile thing, and withdrawal from it into Nirvana as the only desirable solution; so had the old Norsemen with their weird conception of "Ragnarok", the day of the ending of all things, when gods, heavens, and earth should go up in flames, after the powers of hell and destruction had got loose. And this was a much more grim conception than the Christian Last Judgement—since there the just receive their reward, and only the unjust go down to eternal punishment. But if the universe bursts up, gods and all, what has become of the idea of justice?

The conception of the history of the world as a process of consistent deterioration, from a golden age down to a catastrophe well earned by degenerate mankind, is not a very cheerful or inspiring one to guide the way of life. The most obvious deduction from it is, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die". The average man finds within himself no power to withstand the stream of tendency in which he believes himself carried along toward an unhappy end. He does not even exclaim with Hamlet:

> The World is out of joint—O cursed spite
> That ever I was born to set it right.

For how few minds even conceive the idea that it is their duty to stand against the spirit of the times, hard though the task may be. Such minds, of course, there have been in all ages—even in those of chaos and decay, when there was not even a saving religion to promise a reward for resistance to the pressure of an evil world. The Stoics of later Greece and of Roman Imperial times—who, without any faith in the discredited gods of Olympus, stood up to prove that right was right and wrong was wrong, and that the self-respecting man must cling to the right, come what may—were certainly examples of such a type. They lived in a most corrupt and unhappy civilization, their way was certain to be difficult and dangerous, but they were ready to walk in it on first principles and whatever the consequences. Stoics are never numerous—and have been accused of being self-conscious and pedantic by their unsympathizing contemporaries. Nevertheless, they merit our respect.

Their lot was much harder than that of other Pessimists, who like them believed in the degeneracy and wickedness of the world, but stood out against its influence because they were supported by the inspiration of a religion which promised salvation to the individual, though it prophesied destruction for the world. Among them I can include the Buddhist—though his idea of salvation was what seems to most of us a very peculiar one, absorption into the Godhead without the survival of personal identity. But to the Christian or the Mohammedan pessimist the protest against the evil world took the simpler shape of the duty of saving one's own soul—incidentally the souls of others if possible, but primarily one's own. This explains the mentality of the early ascetics; St. Simeon Stylites on the top of his 60-foot pillar, or St. Anthony the Hermit in the depths of the Theban desert, eschewed all touch with the wicked world, because they felt themselves unable to convert it, though they might by untold austerities macerate their own sinful bodies so far as to establish an *ad misericordiam* appeal for pardon from a just but

jealous God. This form of Pessimism was as self-regarding as that of the Stoics, and less justifiable, since it ignored the immensity of God's mercy, and thought only of his omniscience and justice. But it was certainly much less amiable than the asceticism of St. Francis, who with no less profound a belief in the wickedness of the world was able to think of the souls of other men as well as of his own. Nay, he could spare a kindly thought for bird and beast as well as for human sinners. But Francis of Assisi, though an ascetic, was an Optimist, and that makes all the difference between him and Simeon Stylites on his pillar.

The Optimist is a rarer creature than the Pessimist, because enthusiasm is rarer than the grumbling acquiescence in one's surroundings into which the majority of men slip so easily. Caustic remarks about the worthlessness of one's contemporaries and the rottenness of one's *milieu* are easy things to make. To take arms against the conventions of a settled society requires much more energy than to satirize it. It is also a much more uncomfortable and dangerous occupation in many cases. Moreover, periods when optimism seems justifiable, even to a man of a cheerful disposition, are much less frequent in the world's history than periods when mankind's outlook seems gloomy, or at the best doubtful. It is seldom that even the poet can cry out that at this moment to be alive at all is bliss, and to be alive and young is very heaven, as Wordsworth said. It is rare to stand upon some peak in a spiritual Darien and see a new, beautiful, and unknown ocean of possibilities spreading before one. Rarest of all, perhaps, is it to desire to call to the passing hour to stay, because it is so fair.

Yet Optimists there have been, and yet will be, though their optimism is sometimes a little forced, and more often a little illogical. Was Virgil, chanting his song of the glories of the foundation of the Roman race, and the restoration of the Golden Age in the hall of Augustus, a genuine Optimist, or was he but an amiable court-poet singing for his supper?

I prefer to believe the former, for I love Virgil; but Augustus was not really a very pleasant person, and I fancy that Virgil knew it. When Jean Jacques Rousseau wrote sweetly of a former age of primitive virtue and innocence, and taught that a future age of a similar sort was possible even for the jaded and artificial folks of the XVIIIth century, was he a prophet or a charlatan? Considering his private character, one is inclined to take his whole attitude for a mere pose. But, if so, it was a pose which deceived a whole generation, and changed the historical perspective of millions of his contemporaries.

But there are other Optimists of whose genuine inspiration one can have no doubt. And first and foremost among them have been those good men who have had before their eyes a religion of universal salvation, rather than a religion which relies on hell-fire as the most efficient item in its propaganda. When one is thoroughly convinced that one is doing one's best for a righteous cause, which will, and must, triumph in the end, one has a right to be an Optimist, even though incidentally one may have to be a martyr too. One's personal sufferings count for little, if thereby the cause is advanced, and a just God will not fail to take them into account when one's good and evil deeds go into the divine scales. Wherefore there have been epochs of primitive faith, and later epochs of revival, when a genuine optimism prevailed, and the good cause went forth conquering and to conquer. The early apostles making their first assault on the heathen world, the friars of the XIIIth century, the Evangelical missionaries overseas in the earlier XIXth century, were all Optimists, inasmuch as they looked forward to conquering the whole world, and not merely to saving some few chosen souls from the damnation to which the rest of mankind might be doomed. And therein they differed from people like Tertullian or the narrow disciples of Calvin, whose conception of Heaven was that of a very small place destined for a very limited number of the Elect, while the sinners in thousands of millions groaned below. I should call these last Pessimists,

however sure they might be of the salvation of their own little souls.

But it has not been the times of religious fervour alone that have seen an optimistic outlook on the world. There is such a thing as social and political optimism; and one would be loth to deny the name of Optimist to the XVIIIth-century enthusiasts drafting the "Rights of Man" and dreaming of a second Golden Age to be reached by the simple method of exterminating kings and priests, and relapsing into a supposed "state of nature". It was of such an outlook that Wordsworth sang:

> In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
> Of custom, law, and statute took at once
> The attraction of a country of Romance.
> Where Reason seemed the most to assert her rights
> When most intent on making of herself
> A prime enchantress—to assist the work
> Which then was going forward in her name!
> Not favoured spots alone, but the whole earth
> The beauty wore of promise—that which sets
> The budding rose above the rose full blown.

Alas for those poor Optimists of 1792, who had before them no golden age but Robespierre and Bonaparte, the Luddites and the "Six Acts".

A generation later I should not be disposed to deny the name of Optimist to another and a very different set of political enthusiasts—or perhaps one ought not to use the word "enthusiasts", for enthusiasm was hardly the badge of their tribe—but at any rate highly convinced political dogmatists. I mean those very superior persons, the Whigs of the earlier XIXth century, who thought that a bicameral constitution, with a constitutional monarchy or a president if necessary, was a panacea for all human ills.

There was a wave of genuine optimism passing over Europe when men thought that Greece, Naples, and Portugal needed only the application of the Whig formula to make them happy. Nay, with the substitution of a

constitutional president for a king it might even work for Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Honduras. From that easy solution of the difficulties of mankind we are now far away.

> How small of all that human hearts endure
> That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!

Has not Lord Bryce, in his admirable *Modern Democracies*, confessed, as the last heir of the old Liberal tradition, that constitutions are after all far less important things than national character in the working of a state? The old Liberal Optimist of the XIXth century used to lull himself into a state of beatitude by talking of "Progress". "We are better than our fathers because we have the railway, the steamer, the electric telegraph, vaccination, improved sanitation, and vote by ballot." Progress is, he said, inevitable. Evolution is the scientific explanation of the world, and all evolution will be on the right side. This crude theory of optimism overlooks the fact that the close study of history shows that it is not merely evolutionary; it is also not unfrequently cataclysmic—I mean that things sometimes happen which could not have been foreseen by the wisest, and are purely unexpected and not unfrequently destructive. So far from its being true that all history is a record of progress, there are countless examples of its being a record of decay and disaster, as in modern Russia. The Liberal idea of Progress was a rash generalization from the single epoch of the XIXth century, which took into no consideration the set-backs in the history of civilization, and cataclysms, such as those which ended the Assyrian or Egyptian Empires, the old Roman world, or the unity of the Christian Church in the Middle Ages or the Russian Czardom ten years ago. To my thinking, history is not so often the history of the progressive development of a race or an empire, as the story of the working of individual great men on their contemporaries. Personalities like Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Mohammed or Bonaparte, or Lenin actually turn the course of history from its normal channel. And there is no use in talking of

evolution as ruling all things—still less of its being always a progress from the worse to the better.

But whether a man or a generation be pessimistic or optimistic in their historical perspective, it is clear that (as I said before) there have been certain cataclysmic events which have from time to time compelled a revision of values—a general modification of outlook. It is a misfortune that we cannot trace things back to the very beginning of conscious thought, because we require some literary record to help us. No doubt there must have been such revisions of outlook when man first discovered the use of fire, or of agriculture, or of the employment of metals—revisions, I take it, in the optimistic direction, but we can only guess at them. And certainly every race was liable to a sharp change of perspective when national religions received a shock at the same time as national ambitions. The first episode of the kind of which sufficient literary record remains to enable us to visualize the meaning of such a catastrophe, is that which befell the Jews when the destruction of the house of David and the kingdom of Judah synchronized with the burning and desecration of the temple of Jerusalem. When a religion has centred round a single shrine, when, indeed, its more enthusiastic votaries have been for generations working to destroy all minor shrines, and to concentrate all worship and ceremonial round one great temple, it is an awful thing to see that temple deliberately cast down and gutted by a Nebuchadnezzar, more especially when there comes at the same time the end of a hereditary kingship many centuries old, and a transplantation to alien lands of all surviving members of the royal and the priestly castes. Many local worships and royal dynasties had perished before. "Where are the Gods of Hamath and the Gods of Arpad, and the Gods of the City of Sepharvaim?" Sennacherib had asked a century back; he obviously conceived that the God and the city perished together. The God of the Hebrews survived—to become ultimately the God of the Christian world; but the national outlook of the Hebrews was profoundly

modified by the catastrophe of the destruction of the temple. They came to understand that their God could be worshipped otherwhere than in his temple at Jerusalem, even when, after the seventy years of ruin, it could be restored on a modest scale. And the great lesson was that a God invisible and omnipresent was independent of arks and altars and local traditions; and that a nation was independent of local cohabitation round the ancestral sanctuary.

This was a case of both religious and national perspective upset by a catastrophe. Two centuries and a half later there was a good example of political perspective being upset for a whole nation, not by catastrophe, but by sudden expansion. I allude to the Greeks, and the result on their view of the world caused by the exploits of Alexander the Great. The Macedonian conquest of the East revolutionized the relations of the active and high-cultured little states of Greece, both with each other and with the outer world. Civic patriotism received a blow, but in return the establishment of the new Macedonian Empire offered many compensations both to the state and to the individual. If a man consented to forget that he was an Athenian or a Corinthian, and merely to remember that he was a Greek, what was more inspiring than to see that the old Hellenic genius for colonization was not extinct; to behold every land from the Aegean to the Indus covered with Greek cities as large and splendid as any that had ever existed in the old motherland? For every active-minded man, for soldier, poet, painter, scribe, merchant, or seaman, there was instant honourable and lucrative employment. Those Greeks who threw themselves into the new life of the conquered East looked back on the old times of the "balance of power", and its constant wars between democracy and oligarchy, as something petty and absurd. Aristotle's wonderful analysis of the constitution and tendencies of Greek cities seemed out-of-date almost before its author was dead. Shortly after Alexander the Great won his crowning victory over Persia at Arbela,

news came to him of a battle in Greece. Agis King of Sparta had fallen, and with him five thousand brave men more. But the Macedonian turned to his generals and said with a smile: "It seems that while *we* have been conquering the Great King there has been a battle of mice in Arcadia"! While the empire of the Eastern world was being won by the Tigris, fights at home between small armies for a strip of plainland or a border fort seemed contemptible and absurd. For the Greeks who had thrown themselves into Alexander's great adventure the national perspective had suddenly enlarged from a view of the Aegean to a view as far as the Oxus and the Indus. The Hellenic world had been increased twenty-fold. Why discuss constitutions any more, or indulge in petty faction-fights, when the man with a brain and a sword had the universe at his feet?

The vision was illusive, and ended in a veneer of Greek civilization imposed on the East for a few centuries, at the cost of the exhaustion and debasement of the civilizer. There was an end of the Greece of Aristides and Pericles and Socrates, and in return there was produced the Levantine mongrel—as the Romans knew him and as we know him to-day. Juvenal's *Greculus esuriens*, the talented adventurer and charlatan, master of all trades save those for which honesty is indispensable, was the degenerate heir of Ulysses, Themistocles, and Alcibiades, if not of Solon, Plato, and Epaminondas. What a despicable result of what a great endeavour!

The Greek's intoxication of empire, ending in spiritual debasement and national demoralization, had its pendant or parallel in the fate of the Roman. The people of the tough little Republican State on the Seven Hills had a mentality of their own, and an outlook of their own—the Romans were limited, well balanced, intensely permeated with local patriotism, disciplined, and constitutional. Cato the Elder, no very amiable figure but a great citizen, was the perfect exponent of it. To these Romans came, because of their splendid military organization and their unbounded loyalty

to the state, that same delusive boon which had ruined the Greek—world-empire won by the sword. They lost their religion and they lost their liberty in the process. Compare the historical perspective of the elder Cato with that of the half-cosmopolitanized but yet patriotic Cicero, and again that of Cicero—who still thought that liberty might be saved—with the melancholy outlook of Lucan and Tacitus and Juvenal, who saw that the things which made life worth living were gone, though life itself had become incomparably more splendid and complicated under the emperors who had slain liberty.

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento!

had cried Virgil. Art and culture and philosophy may (he sang) be the province of the Greek, but the Roman has discovered the greater art of ruling East and West. Truly he *had* done so, but at what cost! "What shall it profit a man if he win the whole world and lose his own soul?"

And has there often been a century more morally dead than that culminating period of Roman empire the Age of the Antonines—which Gibbon vainly praised as the time in which the greatest number of mortals in recorded history enjoyed the greatest amount of peace and prosperity? Outward prosperity no doubt there was, but it is not true that

Whate'er is best administered is best.

And a period in which the old official religion was defunct, and practically replaced by the absurd institution of Caesar-worship, when Art and Literature were slowly sinking, when ideals were dead and national ambitions exhausted, and liberty a name with which emperors sometimes played as a solemn farce,[1] was no Golden Age. An emperor who was a philosopher saw the hollowness of the whole thing, and did not shrink from setting it down; the *Meditations*

[1] What did Hadrian mean when he struck coins commemorating *Libertas Publica*? It was, I suppose, a jest of this most freakish and talented person.

of Marcus Aurelius are really some of the most melancholy pages in Literature. The world professed to depend on Caesar and to worship him, and Caesar was a Stoic of a resigned cast, and thought that the world was hollow, and that the good man could get no pleasure out of it. Truly the historical perspective was gloomy. Indeed, putting shallow people of superficial life aside, I doubt if there were any real Optimists save the Christian propagandists, who often came to unhappy ends in this Golden Age of Gibbon's. For Marcus Aurelius, odd though it may appear, was not merely a depressed Stoic, but also a persecutor of Christians.

The soulless prosperity of the Antonine Age crumpled up into the lawless anarchy of the IIIrd century, during which some thirty emperors and some fifty usurpers asserted in turn that they were about to restore happiness to the world—FELICITAS TEMPORUM—SAECULUM NOVUM—or RESTITUTIO ORBIS TERRARUM—before they came to an untimely end by the swords of a mutinous soldiery. The time was as debased as the currency struck by the ephemeral wearers of the purple. And it looked for ten years as if the Roman Empire was about to break up, partly to coalesce into new local states like the empire of the Gauls or the empire of Syria, partly to become the prey of the oncoming barbarian—the Goth or the Persian.

From this particular disaster (if it would have been a disaster, which some may possibly dispute) the civilized world was saved for a time by the line of tough soldier emperors of Illyrian provincial blood—Aurelian, Probus, Carus, Diocletian, Constantine, whose military genius and organizing power gave the Roman Empire another century of survival, if not of vitality. For the state as Diocletian left it was a bureaucratic reconstruction, living on an exhausted tradition, and with no inspiring ideal of religion or patriotism. Mars and Jupiter were as dead as Cincinnatus and Scipio. There only remained a vague confidence in the diuturnity of the Roman Empire as an inevitable ancient fact. To the people of this exhausted and dispirited civiliza-

tion came in the IVth century two cataclysms, the one preceding the other by a couple of generations—the triumph of Christianity and the triumph of the outer barbarians, each a complete negation of the old Imperial theory of the world ruled as a Roman Empire by a divine Caesar. There had been full warning of the approach of these two cataclysms—already there had been emperors who were more or less Christians in secret, and already the Barbarians had been seen for a moment at Aquileia, at Delphi, at Trebizond, at Ephesus, and at Antioch in the evil years of the IIIrd century. A moral or political cataclysm put off for some decades is not thereby averted. The triumph of Christianity and the triumph of the Barbarians were both inevitable, because the moribund Imperial system had no inspiration or enthusiasm in it, while both the Christian propagandist and the wild men of the Northern woods were overflowing with vitality—however unamiable the one might appear to a pagan pedant like Julian the Apostate, or the other to a cultured *littérateur* like Sidonius Apollinaris.

Between A.D. 320 and A.D. 420 the whole outlook of the civilized world changed. There was never such a complete alteration of moral and political values in such a short time before or since. Imagine Horace or Tacitus faced by problems of Original Sin, Justification by Faith, and the precise definition of the doctrine of the Trinity as the most important intellectual problems of mankind, the all-engrossing topics of the philosophically minded individual. The conception would have appeared even more impossible than the idea of a Gothic king of Italy, ruling at Ravenna and dictating orders to a subservient Roman senate, the astounding phenomenon which was to be seen two generations later.

One might add that the enormity of this change of historical perspective for the civilized world was felt most acutely at the time. Orosius wrote his immense general history, at the request of St. Augustine, about A.D. 417, precisely to demonstrate to the surviving adherents of the

old theory of the Roman Empire that they had misjudged the universe. From the earliest records of the East down to the Gothic invasions of his own day, as he demonstrated, mankind had been a sinful race, vexed by well-deserved wars and disasters. Empires had crumpled up, nations been exterminated, all down the centuries. Salvation was for the individual soul. Sin was the dominating fact in the world, and sin involved punishment by a just God. Man was to look after his own soul—and by the grace of God might preserve it—but there was no official or bureaucratic guarantee of salvation for a man, merely as a citizen of the Roman Empire, or even as a baptized Christian. Whether salvation was gained mainly by faith or mainly by works, or by the fiat of the divinity unconditioned by mere faith or works, was another problem; and that problem was to be discussed by the Christian world down to our own day.

For more than a thousand years onward, from the day of Orosius and Augustine, Christian Europe had as a whole a perspective in which Sin and Grace were the dominating factors; and the salvation of one's own soul and the souls of others was the all-absorbing task of righteous men. The ordained instrument of salvation was the Church, and in comparison with the Church earthly kingdoms, which were usually fleeting and ephemeral, were of comparatively minor importance. The old idea of the diuturnity of the Roman Empire was superseded by the new idea of the diuturnity of the Church. What were kingdoms like the Vandal kingdom in Africa, the Ostrogothic kingdom in Italy, the Visigothic kingdom in Spain, the kingdom of the Lombards, Burgundians, and so forth, but things of a few scores of years or a few centuries which vanished away? The Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne was a vast but unreal archaeological conception, falsified ere its founder had been dead a hundred winters; and the Holy Roman Empire of Otto the Great had not even the pretence of universality which had rendered the creation of Charlemagne imposing. It turned into nothing more

than the attempt of three German dynasties to maintain a precarious sovereignty over Rome and Italy. And the attempt failed—to the lasting misery of Germany and Italy alike.

Meanwhile the dominating idea of the thousand years was not the Holy Roman Empire but the Church. And (unfortunately), as the great struggle between Guelf and Ghibelline verged to its end, it became clear that the Church—the victor in the strife—was rotten through and through, as rotten as the Holy Roman Empire of Sigismund of Luxemburg or Frederic of Austria. The papacy of the Avignonese Captivity and the Great Schism and the Conciliar epoch of the XVth century was obviously out of gear—unable to speak with moral authority any longer. Hence the profound spiritual depression with which the Middle Ages ended. It was a time of heresies—honest protests many of them, but unsatisfying as schemes of salvation for the world.

I do not think that I can give a better example of the normal outlook on the world during the Middle Ages than that shown by the great *Nuremberg Chronicle* of 1493. History is conceived of in the well-known "seven ages", the sixth of which is supposed to be drawing somewhat towards its close. So after the description of the events of the year 1492, including a great execution of Jews, and portraits of Pope Alexander VI and the Emperor Maximilian, we come to a blank of six pages, left virgin white for the use of the owner of the book, who is invited to fill them up in manuscript with the transactions of the short time that the world has still to endure. Then we come to *Septima Aetas Mundi*, consisting of an account from the Book of Revelations of the rise of the Beast, the False Prophet, and Antichrist, the martyrdom of the Two Witnesses, the pouring out of the Seven Vials, and finally the Last Judgement. All these events are profusely illustrated with the splendid woodcuts in which Michael Wohlgemuth was so strong. He revelled in lurid scenes of battle, murder, and sudden death. His devils of the last

pages are particularly horrible and convincing, as they are throughout this wonderful *Chronicle*.

One can perhaps understand this pessimistic conception of the fate of the Universe in the eyes of the common reader of religious mind and orthodox tendencies, by a glance round the contemporary political situation. For that large majority of mankind in Europe who were unaffected by the Renaissance and the Revival of Learning, the times were, indeed, out of joint. Religious enthusiasm was played out, the heresies of Wycliffe and Huss had been crushed, but the morality and mentality of the world were none the better for the victory of orthodoxy. The long struggle between the Papacy and the General Councils, which had been the main feature of XVth-century history, had brought no credit to either of the two institutions. The Councils had been factious and unrepresentative, and had ended in discredit. The Popes of the "Great Schism" might have been scandalous, but even John XXIII was less scandalous than Rodrigo Borgia, who now as Alexander VI had been just enthroned in the Vatican, one year before the *Nuremberg Chronicle* was printed. The Holy Roman Empire had sunk to the lowest depth of impotent discredit under Frederick III, who died in the very year that the *Chronicle* was printed (1493). There was no good reason to expect any great resurrection of the Imperial prestige under his flighty if chivalrous son Maximilian. The constant threat to all Christendom from the Ottoman Turks was still in existence; ever since the fall of Constantinople in 1453 the danger had appeared imminent. And the one great warrior king who had served as the warden of the Danube marches for all Europe, Matthias Corvinus of Hungary, was recently dead (1490) and had left his throne to an unworthy successor. Whether the common Christian man was in his soul Guelf or Ghibelline, whether he was more affected by the theory of the world-dominion of the Church or by that of the secular dominion of the Holy Roman Empire, he had little to comfort him in the political outlook. And

the moral outlook was distressing: the Saints were dead the Church was in the hands of politicians – often politicians of scandalous life. The reformation-ideal of the General Councils had failed entirely; no one could foresee that another Reformation-Ideal of a very different sort was on the way; and if the men of 1493 could have foreseen Luther and Calvin they might perhaps have been more convinced than ever that the Iron Age, *Sexta Aetas Mundi*, was about to end in chaos and the Last Judgement! But turn on a few years, and from the outlook of the ordinary man we are no longer at the end of a feeble and moribund Christendom, but at the start of a new and vigorous age, full of ideals, moral, cultural, philosophical, religious, and materialistic. As I said in an earlier page, it would take a whole book to discuss the question how far the Revival of Learning, the Reformation, the discovery of America and the Cape Route to the Indies, or scientific discovery which knocked the Geocentric Theory on the head, were each of them responsible for the new historical perspective of the civilized world. But the change was complete and astounding; and the foundations of the modern ways of thought had been laid, while the "Seven Ages" in their depressing series had dropped out of men's conception of the Universe. A new visualization of the world had begun.

I have now arrived at the starting-point of modern thought. Every reader of history may fill in for himself the details of the later changes in historical perspective which have filled the four centuries that have elapsed since the Reformation and the Renaissance. I reckon myself that there are no more than *three* of all-pervading importance. First, the Liberal, Modernist, Scientific, Humanitarian outlook of the later XVIIIth century with "Back to Nature", the "Rights of Man", and "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" as its watchwords. That was destined to end in bitter disillusionment, the guillotine, endless wars of conquest, and a military despotism such as the world had not seen since Julius Caesar.

Secondly, cutting curiously across the last, and decrying its cosmopolitan enthusiasm, was the Nationalist movement of the XIXth century, with its appeal to half-forgotten race-feeling of which the XVIIIth-century movement had made such mockery. In this new historical perspective to be a "friend of humanity", as the XVIIIth-century man called himself, was to be suspect. Ancient ties of blood and culture and historic glory were exhumed from oblivion —ancient grudges and neighbourly enmities resuscitated also. We have it with us in full force to-day, when the cry of "Self-determination" is raised, and has, alas! become the counter-cry to the Brotherhood of Man.

But deplorable as some of the developments both of XVIIIth-century Humanitarianism and XIXth-century Nationalism may have been, what are we to say of the last change of historical perspective of all which has lately influenced too many wild brains? The conception of "Class-consciousness" dominating all other ideas; the rejection of Liberty as inconsistent with inquisitorial state-control, and of Equality as inconsistent with the worship of "majoritarianism" (horrid word!), and of Fraternity because the alleged majority refuses to acknowledge certain sections of society as brothers at all, is certainly the most appalling of all moral phenomena. We who eye the working of the Bolshevist outlook as contemporary observers are sometimes tempted to relapse into the mental pose of the chronicler of 1493, who saw Antichrist and the Last Judgement looming close at hand. Many men of sane temperament, like Edmund Burke, felt the same in 1793 when they contemplated the bloodthirsty antics of the Jacobins. That madness ultimately made an end of itself by self-exposure of its odious hypocrisy and undisguised tyranny. I suppose that the madness of to-day will have a similar end: there appear already to be signs of that happy consummation—Bolshevism is too obviously the despotism of an armed minority which denies the Rights of Man.

Meanwhile its very existence and local triumph have altered the historical perspective of our own generation.

We who have seen it will never have the same outlook on the future—or the past—as we had before the Great War. The sight of such anarchy has justified many old fears and disappointed some old hopes. Our estimate of political values and possibilities has had to be reconstructed. The Pessimist, incidentally, has enjoyed one of those periods in which he is able to snarl "I told you so" to a disconcerted world. But all down history the Pessimist has never had the last word. I prefer to range myself with the Optimists, and hope to survive long enough to see another vista of hope before my own generation has passed away. I know not whether the change of perspective will come by means of the League of Nations, which has provoked so much enthusiasm in so many quarters, or whether it will be the result of a saner nationalism which can combine true patriotism with a proper regard for the rights of one's neighbours. All I know is that the world-mind works by action and reaction, and that a swing of the pendulum in one direction will ultimately be followed by a swing in the other. That to my mind is the teaching of history.

II

A DEFENCE OF MILITARY HISTORY

"EVERY battle of the warrior", wrote the prophet Isaiah, "is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood." Between his age and our own there have been many worthy people, including no small number of historians, who never arrived at any clearer notion of the meaning of military operations than that they involve many loud and discordant sounds, abhorrent to the civilian's ear, and are attended by a lamentable loss of human life. Thus felt many a cloistered chronicler of the Middle Ages, and thus too many a writer of more modern times, who strove to justify his personal dislike for, or ignorance of, military things by depreciating their importance and significance in world-history. One may dislike war just as one dislikes disease; but to decry the necessity for studying it, and estimating its meaning and effect, is no less absurd than it would be to minimize the need for medical investigation because one disliked cancer or tuberculosis. After all, war has been, throughout the ages, one of the most prominent phenomena in man's dealing with man. One may hold that it is fundamentally immoral, but that does not excuse one from the necessity of endeavouring to discover its characteristics. Even the most convinced pacifist cannot deny its existence, and he is but deluding himself if he tries to maintain that it is a negligible quantity in the annals of mankind. Yet there was a generation of historians who were blind enough to hold this view. To show their mentality I may quote a paragraph drawn from the *History of the English People* by J. R. Green, a typical product of the old Liberal optimism, which still

to-day has its thousands of readers because of its attractive literary style. He wrote:

> It is the reproach of historians that they have too often turned history into a mere record of the butchery of men by their fellow-men. But war plays a small part in the real story of European nations, and in that of England its part is smaller than in any. The only war that has profoundly affected English society and English government is the Hundred Years War with France (1336–1451), and of that war the results were simply evil.

This is an astonishing paragraph, and the perversity of the mental attitude implied in it seems to grow more gratuitous as we ponder on each of its sentences. Did Green, who was after all an historian, conceive in truth that the campaign of Hastings did not profoundly affect English society and English government? Did he regard Plassey and Quebec as negligible happenings in the history of the development of the British Empire? Still more, perhaps, might he wonder at the implied judgement that the campaigns of the War of American Independence, which forced Britain to give up her old theory of colonial administration, had no effect on the future government and growth of her empire. We cannot now in fairness ask, for the historian is long since dead, whether he would have persisted that the miserable "Hundred Years War" was to have more permanent and marked effects on the nation than the war of 1914–18. Would that cataclysm, one wonders, have upset his comfortable theory of humanitarianism and pacifism? Perhaps it would: it gave a severe shaking to the mentality of many an old Liberal, who, reared in the optimism of mid-Victorian thought, had spoken of war as an antiquated bugbear, unworthy of the serious study of civilized men. Hypnotized by the XIXth-century conception of "Progress", as the explanation and end of all human activity, and fortified by the happy invention of the term "evolution", a whole generation tried to ignore the obvious facts of history. They decided

that war was wicked, and therefore it was useless to interest oneself in its details.

One may trace several separate strands of prejudice in the mentality of those who decried military history. One was mere reaction against what they called the "drum and trumpet" history of their predecessors. The Democrat who has gone to the opposite extreme of unwisdom, and has determined that, as Green put it, "history is the history of peoples, as opposed to the personal adventures of kings and statesmen", is prone to decry the influence of individuals on the long tale of the centuries. If "the people" is to be the protagonist, the historian gets infected with the old "equalitarian" dislike for figures that seem too great to fit into the frame of everyday national life. He will try to whittle down the outstanding personality into a mere typical development of the tendencies of his age and his race—whose greatness shall not offend the susceptibilities of smaller men, and sin against the great doctrine of equality. If the story ends by making the hero a mere incarnation of our race or our *Zeitgeist*, it is all the more flattering to ourselves. And an allusion to evolutionary necessities of time and place may often disguise the real abnormality of the mighty individual.

Against vague theories of inevitable world-movements and regular processes, no fact protested more strongly than the prominence of war in the accepted history of the world. Therefore the attempt was made to decry its importance in the annals of mankind, and to explain that it was normally a mere tiresome, disturbing element in human progress, which settled nothing. This is pacifist and humanitarian prejudice falsifying the real record of the ages; it is simply a negation of real history.

But enough of this misconception of history as a thing that is practically unaffected by wars. I look upon war as merely the greatest of the influences that make history "cataclysmic". There are others, natural phenomena sometimes—such as earthquakes, inundations, the desiccation of lands once well watered, and changes of climate.

Pestilence again has several times left its mark on the history of the world—the great plagues in the time of Marcus Aurelius had no mean effect on the enfeebling of the Roman Empire—the Black Death in the XIVth century absolutely wiped out the Viking settlement in Greenland, and probably thereby retarded for a century and a half the rediscovery of America. But the cataclysm in history is not so frequently due to the result of mere physical phenomena as to the appearance of some individual human being of unusual endowments—and here Carlyle was not so very far wrong in his general theory that the decisive marks in the annals of the world are the "Heroes", as he called them, the outstanding figures of men who left their impress on their own time, and often on the future also.

Take, for example, Mohammed: I have never yet come across any historian who has made the attempt to prove that the Prophet of Mecca was no more than a logical and inevitable product of the intellectual and economic conditions of Arabia in the VIIth century after Christ, and that if *he* had never lived some other prophet must have arisen to launch the Saracen invasion upon the Roman and Persian Empires. There have been many prophets of the fighting sort, from Simon Bar-Cochba to the Sudanese Mahdi—but it required a prophet of very exceptional type to frame a theory of militant religion which should sweep over half the civilized world, from no better base than the deserts of Arabia. It is worth while remembering that in the whole of human annals that great peninsula has never again produced a man who has exercised any notable influence outside its limits; Mohammed was anything but a normal product of his time and race. At the most all the advocate of evolution can plead is that he had an exceptionally lucky chance before him, at the moment when the Roman and Persian Empires had just bled each other to a desperate pitch of exhaustion after a war of twenty years. But such opportunities had occurred before, only there was no Mohammed to take advantage of them.

The founder of Islam was undoubtedly a cataclysmic

personage, whose career could not have been foretold from any careful consideration of antecedent causes; but there have been others—take, for example, Alexander the Great. It would be absurd to say that the Macedonian conquest of the Near East, which added Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt to the European block of states for nine hundred years, was in any way a necessary development from the existing state of affairs in the Levant in 335 B.C. It was only the brain and energy of Alexander which created the Hellenic East. Consider the circumstances: we have only to suppose that Philip II on his assassination had been followed by a son of poor or moderate ability—let us say by Alexander's actual successor, his incapable half-brother, Philip Arrhidaeus. Can anyone doubt that the result of such a succession would have been the break-up of the recently acquired Macedonian overlordship over the states of Greece and a time of chaos? There would have been no Macedonian conquest of Western Asia, no Hellenization of Syria and Asia Minor, no Greek kingdoms established so far east as the Indus and the Sutlej. Not merely three hundred but a thousand years of history, beyond the Bosphorus, might have taken a completely different aspect. Or again, supposing Alexander killed at his first Asiatic victory on the Granicus, where he exposed himself most recklessly, or smitten down by the chance of war a year or two later, before his career was fully developed—like Maurice of Saxony, or Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden—it is certain that his imbecile brother and his jealous and factious captains would have failed to carry out the vast scheme that he had designed. Everything turned on the great personality of one man, and his ability for war and organization.

To cite further instances of "cataclysmic" personalities would be easy and superfluous. But if once we grant that the fate of kingdoms—nay, of whole continents—may turn on the appearance of a great military figure, and on his application of strategy and tactics and organization to the problems of his day, we cannot refuse to concede that

not only his personality but his methods of war must be studied as an important item in world-history. To ignore them, and to hand them over to the study of the military specialist, is unphilosophic and unworthy of the self-respecting historian.

A further deduction follows. Military history must be studied because it gives the explanation of many of the great cataclysms which break up the annals of the world into separate epochs. There have been a limited number of epoch-making campaigns and engagements whose result has changed the whole trend of national development in a section of the world, yet whose event could not have been foretold from any mere studying of constitutional tendencies, or economic conditions, or social institutions. The fighting man has occasionally put the clock forward or back in the most unforeseen fashion.

To take an obvious example from our own medieval history—the result of the campaign of Hastings in 1066 was by no means a foregone conclusion, and had the fate of that battle fallen otherwise than it did all the subsequent history of England would have borne a different aspect. It is easy to be wise after the event, and to say that Harold's defeat was made possible by Anglo-Saxon localism, want of a strong executive, and employment of antiquated tactics. But, granted all this, it was still quite possible that the Norman invasion might have had another and a less successful end. If the English fleet had continued to hold the sea, as it had been doing till a few days before Duke William set sail, the overloaded Norman squadron might have been beaten before it ever saw the coast of Sussex. Had the invader been a less skilful general, had he been the ordinary feudal chief, and trusted for victory to the furious rush of his cavalry alone, his expedition would have miscarried—and Domesday Book would never have been written. Had Harold Godwineson used better tactics and succeeded in keeping his levies in better discipline, he might have founded a dynasty and died peaceably in his bed. And suppose that the axe-blow, which, as we know,

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brained Duke William's horse, had fallen instead on the head of its rider and slain him, it is certain that the battle would have been lost and that the Norman Conquest would never have been completed; for there was no other military figure beyond the Channel in that or the succeeding age who had the genius and the initiative required for the conduct of such an expedition. Both the Conqueror himself and his opportunity were unique; it seems safe to say that if he had fallen at Hastings, England would have remained a purely insular state, and would never have been tangled up with continental politics as she was during the reigns of the Norman and Angevin kings; so that her history would have borne a greater resemblance to that of the Scandinavian states, and would have proceeded on isolated lines of its own, as it had done for the last two centuries.

But let us take another and a more modern instance of the way in which military events govern the whole history not only of a country but of a whole continent. The final outcome of the wars of the French Revolution was quite uncertain till the appearance of Bonaparte. It is quite impossible to foresee what might have happened if he had fallen by some chance bullet at Montenotte or at Arcola. A well-known historian once wrote that if Bonaparte had not been Bonaparte, Moreau would have been! In calling his epigram absurd I do not mean that the French Directorate was not fated to find its doom at the hands of a military dictator. But what ordinary dictator—whether Moreau or another—who had executed a *coup d'état*, would have been of the calibre sufficient to enact the after-career of Bonaparte: to wear the crown of Charlemagne and to carry his victorious arms to Vienna, Madrid, Berlin, and Moscow? It was the personal equation of Napoleon—one of the most cataclysmic of historical personages—that was the all-important thing. The special combination of world-wide ambition, military genius, and power of organization in the Corsican made the first French Empire what it was, and gave the history of Europe the particular form that it was to take during fifteen

eventful years of the early XIXth century. And not only so, but the results of what Bonaparte did, and of what he failed to do, were to exert their influence for long decades after his fall, and to set going many a problem that has not even yet received its solution. The whole history of Europe was deflected by the exploits of an exceptional personage working entirely by his exceptional military ability—making history by battles.

A new deduction now follows. Military events, as we have now pointed out, affect the history of the world in cataclysmic fashion; they have as a rule resulted from the appearance of the heroic individual figure. But it cannot be denied that occasionally the fortunes of war have been settled, and the world's history deflected, not by a single commanding military genius, but by a school or succession of leaders not rising to any surprising personal eminence, but applying a system of tactics and organization developed as a national or professional heritage. The best example of this phenomenon on record is the subjection first of Italy and then of the whole Mediterranean world by the consuls and pro-consuls of the Roman Republic. The men of outstanding ability among them were few, and we do not even know to whom we should ascribe the first foundation or the tactical organization of the legion, the great military machine with its peculiar and effective infantry tactics, which proved capable, when properly handled, of dealing with any possible enemy—with the formidable Macedonian phalanx, with the agile Numidian horse, with the furious onset of a Gallic or Teutonic tribal levy, or with the guerrilla tactics of the Ligurian or Iberian mountaineer. Military history must study not only the campaigns of Scipio, Sulla, or Julius Caesar, but the operations of many minor generals reared in the same great legionary school of tactics, if we would understand the rise of Rome to empire.

So similarly with more modern instances: we are bound, in order to understand the history of Europe, to study the rise and dominance of other schools of war, such as that

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of the Tartar or Mongol horse-bowman, the terror of Western Asia and Eastern Europe for more than a century, of the English archery of the XIVth and XVth centuries of the men who won Cressy and Agincourt. Nor must we neglect the history of the Swiss pikemen, who not only created their own small and anomalous confederacy, but were the arbiters of battle—to Machiavelli's disgust—on a hundred stricken fields in Italy. The Ottoman Empire, essentially a military creation, is inexplicable without a knowledge of the tactics of the Janissaries and their comrades of the Turkish light horse, who beat both East and West—as witness Kossovo, Nicopolis and Mohács, Tchaldiran and Ridanieh—and built up an unnatural state which reached from Buda Pest to Bagdad, from Kaffa to Cairo. Many of their leaders, the sultans of the house of Othman, were men of capacity, but it was the machine and its tactics which created the empire, though the machine was destined to run down when it fell into the hands of degenerates and imbeciles.

Wherever a military discovery or innovation, in organization, armament, or tactics, has affected the general course of history, we must investigate and explain it with the same care with which modern historians treat economic and social discoveries and innovations. Otherwise we shall have a lop-sided history of the world, as I fear is too much the case at present, when there are scores who study the development of the woollen industry or of steam navigation, for one who tries to make out the true history of the introduction of gunpowder into war, or of the rise of modern standing regular armies.

That this should be the case seems to me exceptionally strange when we are at the end of the greatest war that the world has ever known, a war that has shaken to pieces that long-established anomaly the Austrian Empire, which has turned Russia from an ill-administered monarchical state into a still worse administered communistic oligarchy of Commissars, and Germany from a military monarchy into a democratic republic, which has re-created lost states

like Poland and Bohemia, and made small states like Rumania and Serbia into very large ones. All this was simply the result of fighting—cataclysmic phenomena on the largest scale. The optimist of the old Liberal and evolutionary creed may pretend to believe that the event of the Great War was inevitable from the first, that the cause of Liberty must triumph over the cause of Militarism, and so forth. But the optimist is deceiving himself and his audience by plausible rhetoric. The future history of the world turned in 1914–18 on purely military problems. Would a great strategical conception—von Schlieffen's "new Cannae" for enveloping the forces of France by a vast westward wheel in August–September 1914—succeed or not in the hands of the younger von Moltke? Was the submarine, ruthlessly used, capable of bringing a sea-girt state like Great Britain over the edge of starvation to surrender? Would air-raids by Zeppelins or smaller craft, or the employment of poison gas, or the invention of the tank, have any decisive effect, or any effect at all, on the settlement of a campaign? Is it possible to break by frontal attack a deep system of fortified positions, adequately manned by defenders who have line after line behind them to which they can fall back? I do not hesitate to say that the history of the world turned on these practical military problems, and not on any ethical or metaphysical considerations. "Mi itarism," over which we now intone edifying funeral orations, was at least twice on the edge of winning the war. Do not let us deceive ourselves by pretending that its failure was from the first inevitable.

Let us grant, then, that it is right that history should teach on the military side. The directing classes in any nation should have a certain general knowledge of the history of the Art of War, just as they ought also to be instructed in economic or constitutional history. "What touches all is the business of all", and it is no more right to hand over the study of military history to professional soldiers alone than it would be to permit no one but lawyers to touch constitutional history. Till some such general knowledge

exists it is open to any person, military man or citizen, to "pontificate" upon one of the necessary functions of the state without being recognized at once as a crank or a sciolist by the audience that he is addressing. It is not the soldier alone who should know the outlines of the past history of his art. As long as we live under the present form of Constitutional Government our Ministers will be influenced not only by the precepts of their military advisers, but by the public opinion of their party and of the whole nation. It is absolutely necessary that they should have some knowledge of their own, and not be bound to accept blindfold the orders of their military mentor.

I know that I am here treading on debatable ground. The perils of "amateur strategy" have been sufficiently insisted upon of late by a good many professional pens. And it has been laid down that on the declaration of war a prime minister should simply state to the recognized military authority—the Chief of the General Staff or whoever it may be in different countries—what are the political ends which he wishes to obtain, and then wash his hands of the whole matter and make no comment, criticism, or interference on what that military authority may do. His duty, it is alleged, is merely to supply as many men and as much money and munitions as the soldier may ask for. Now, this I hold to be dangerous doctrine; I am fully aware of the dangers of amateur strategy, when a Government interferes with or overrules the decisions of the military authority to whom it has given over responsibility. One need only think of the bad times which McClellan and other Federal generals endured at the hands of the Washington Government during the Civil War of 1861–5, or of certain incidents in our own history between 1914 and 1918.

But military supreme authorities like other human beings are fallible. Take obvious instances: The Austrian Government in 1805 handed over the control of operations against Napoleon to General Mack, a man whose plausible personality and power of self-assertion had gained him an

undeserved reputation among soldiers as well as among civilians. He happened to be an incompetent windbag, and in six weeks after the outbreak of war had surrendered the main body of the Austrian army, and let the French into Vienna. To come nearer to our own day—the French Government in 1914 trusted its professional advisers at the outbreak of the Great War, and these advisers (who had been pondering over the strategy of a Franco-German war for long years) adopted their famous "Plan No. 17". This was a deplorable document, which argued from erroneous premises to false conclusions, and based itself on a theory of the old Napoleonic *offensive à l'outrance*. Within a month the French invasion scheme had miscarried hopelessly and the German armies were within thirty miles of Paris—only to be foiled by their own misguidance, both of the army commanders and of the General Headquarters. Hence the so-called "Miracle of the Marne". The man who foresaw what the aspect of war was going to be was no soldier but the civilian banker Bloch!

It is obvious that no minister can say to his country: "I handed over the charge of our war to the proper professional authority, and am therefore in no wise responsible for its results—which happen to be disastrous." It is clear that the civil heads of the state must retain some power to comment, to criticize, even to quash—though they must use it with all discretion and under terrible consciousness of responsibility. Light-hearted interference with details is, of course, criminal: the countermanding of part of the arrangements of a commander-in-chief while the rest is allowed to stand is quite as bad. He may find himself, like McClellan before Richmond in 1862, committed to a scheme, and then deprived of part of the resources with which he was intending to carry it out; or he may have a new objective pointed out to him which is not identical with the one on which he started.

Nevertheless, I think that the danger of laying down a rule of strict and rigid non-interference by the civil power is quite as great a risk as the opposite danger of frivolous

interference. The responsible minister must retain not only the right to supersede a commander whose work has obviously failed, but the right to submit criticisms and suggestions, even when his achievements are on the whole satisfactory. The better acquainted with the rules of war that the minister may be the less will he be tempted to interfere without necessity, and the less unreasonable should his suggestions prove. I see no fundamental objection to a Supreme War Council kept in touch with the commander in the field, provided that it is composed of the best instructed and most capable persons. But interference amounting to absolute negation of the commander's schemes, conducted by individuals not thoroughly versed in the practical affairs of war, is obviously deleterious. So found the Austrian generals opposed to Bonaparte in 1796–7 when the Aulic Council, not a military committee but a ministerial caucus, kept continually varying the objective prescribed to their commanders, and even interfering with details of the movements of troops in the field. In the old American War, Howe, Clinton, and Cornwallis found dreadful maltreatment at the hands of the truly detestable Lord George Germaine. So found also certain British and French generals, if we are not mistaken, during the Great War. But the remedy is not military authoritarianism, since generals are no more infallible than ministers. And looking down the record of the ages we may conclude that each class has only too much occasion to rail at the other, and that neither should claim omniscience, infallibility, or omnipotence.

III

THE BATTLE OF MAIDA

THE Battle of Maida is essentially of tactical and not of strategical importance. It was the forerunner of all the great battles of the Peninsular War so far as tactics go; it only differed from them in results because the British Army was commanded by Sir John Stuart and not Sir Arthur Wellesley. The troops and the tactics were the same if the generalship was different. The first clash of Kempt's British light brigade and Compère's heavy battalion columns, of which I have to tell in this screed, gives the key to the whole tactical superiority of the British infantry which lay at the base of Wellington's victorious schemes during the years 1808–15. The battle passed without much notice at the time, because the Neapolitan campaign of 1806 forms a piece of by-play between the campaign of Austerlitz and the campaign of Jena; which few British and hardly a single continental commentator have cared to investigate. Its strategical and political results were nil; its moral results passed unperceived at the time, save among the handful of British officers of ready intelligence who laid to heart what they had seen and stored up its teaching for future use.

It is unfortunate that we have few independent narratives of the Battle of Maida either from the English or the French side. There are Peninsular fights of which the tale can be reconstructed from the evidence of a full score of eye-witnesses on the one side or the other, especially during the later years of the war. But at Maida the numbers engaged were small, only 5,200 on the side of the British

and 6,400 on that of their adversaries. The latter were not so proud of the result that they should be eager to commit their experiences to paper. The former were so few that it is not surprising that few narratives survive—Bunbury's is the only one which runs to great length, though de Watteville's notes (sent me by his grandson, to my infinite gratitude), an invaluable letter from Colborne (later Lord Seaton), then a lieutenant in the 20th, and the interesting screed of Colonel Stewart in the regimental history of the 78th, with the diary of Charles Boothby of the Engineers, have helped me much. Reynier's dispatch has never been published; it is of great length, and along with the complete set of "morning states", and the headquarters correspondence of the army of Naples, all in the French archives, has enabled me to give the fight from the point of view of the vanquished side pretty fully. Especially I find that I can account for the exact numbers present under Reynier, a thing that was never certainly known before. Of maps there is only one available—the very pretty and rather too detailed one which I used as the base of that given on page 48. It is contemporary, and therefore invaluable.

Over the political preliminaries of the Calabrian campaign of 1806 I pass as lightly as possible. The imbecile King and the reckless, immoral Queen of Naples had resolved (too late to give help, but not too late to ruin themselves) to engage in the great coalition of Austria, Russia, and England against Napoleon, whose landmarks are Ulm, Trafalgar, and Austerlitz. The Queen of Naples summoned English and Russian auxiliaries to her kingdom, and defied the Emperor just four days before the disaster of Ulm. This small and miscellaneous army, hastily gathered, had not yet crossed the Neapolitan frontier when the news of Austerlitz came to hand. Almost with it came the tidings that Napoleon had decreed that the Bourbons of Naples should cease to reign, and, freed from the Austrian war, was about to launch a great army under Masséna into southern Italy. The Russians went home; the 7,000 British

troops, who had been landed at Naples, were ordered by their Government to retire to Sicily, which was defensible because it was sea-girt and protected by our naval power. Thither, too, the King and Queen ultimately retired, but they left their army behind, to be smashed up by the oncoming French. The main body was utterly defeated and dispersed at the Battle of Campo Tenese in March 1806. Only 2,000 men out of 20,000 escaped to Sicily. The sole place in the kingdom that held out—the sea-girt fortress of Gaeta, far north of Naples—was maintained by the one capable general whom Queen Caroline owned, the hard-drinking, hard-fighting Prince of Hesse—Philipsthal. He held out against Masséna and the French main army from March to July, contrary to the expectation of both allies and enemies, for no one had believed that Neapolitan soldiers could fight, even behind stone walls. Meanwhile Napoleon appointed his brother Joseph King of the Two Sicilies, and bade him complete the conquest of the kingdom given him. The French army, marching far and wide to receive the easily won submission of the Neapolitan towns, gradually got divided into three sections, connected with each other only by insignificant posts of communication. Masséna with 15,000 men was busy in the siege of Gaeta; near him were 3,000 more men, garrisoning Naples for the new king. But St-Cyr with 12,000 men was far off, busy in occupying Apulia and the Capitanata, while the third force of 10,000 men under Reynier and Verdier, who had won the Battle of Campo Tenese and overrun all the peninsula of Calabria as far as Messina, was still more distant from the capital and the commander-in-chief.

The Neapolitan bourgeoisie of the county towns had accepted the nomination of King Joseph and the annexation of the kingdom with apathy. Not so the peasants of the Apennines, and especially the Calabrese, who regarded the French as atheists and aliens, and remembered the final triumph of the Bourbons and their first restoration to their kingdom in 1799. Fifty thousand soldiers might

overrun the whole kingdom of Naples and occupy its chief towns, but they could not occupy every village or guard every defile. Hence, when the first panic that followed Masséna's invasion was over, insurgent bands began to show themselves in the hills, and the army of occupation found plenty of work in hunting them, and failed to extirpate them.

The Bourbon Government, in its refuge at Palermo, and the English general, who now commanded 11,000 men in Sicily, found the temptation to try a sudden blow at the scattered French columns too great to be resisted. They undervalued the number of the enemy, whom they estimated at 30,000 instead of their real 50,000, and also believed them to be far more scattered than was really the case. The belief that Reynier had only 5,000 in Calabria, and these scattered over the whole province, was the false conception that lay at the base of Sir John Stuart's expedition, which sailed from Messina on June 30, 1806, with no greater ambition than that of beating up the enemy and aiding the insurgents to drive him out of Calabria. No greater scheme was at the bottom of the design, and (it may be added) neither the Sicilian Government, nor the brisk, fussy general in command, nor Sidney Smith, the active volatile admiral who was to aid him, was capable of framing a more ambitious plan. In short, it was to be one of the pin-pricks which (down to the outbreak of the Peninsular War) were all that we ever tried against Napoleon's vast Continental power.

The expeditionary force was wholly destitute of cavalry —sixteen orderly dragoons, told off to the brigadiers, constituted its whole mounted force. There were ten mountain guns packed on mules, and one field battery of six guns (four six-pounders and two howitzers) with about 150 artillerymen. The infantry consisted of six infantry battalions (20th, 1/27th, 1/58th, 2/78th, 1/81st, and de Watteville's Swiss corps). But from the flank companies of these,[1] aided

[1] Only the 2/78th had been allowed to keep its flank companies, and so took the field complete.

by the flank companies of two other regiments in Sicily, which did not sail (the 1/35th and 1/61st), there had been formed a light battalion and a grenadier battalion of seven and six companies respectively. This left the main units shorn of their picked men and short of two companies each; their numbers were very low, therefore—the 58th had only 550 rank and file left, the 1/81st, 570, Watteville's only 520, when sick and detached were deducted—and the sick in a Sicilian summer were always very numerous in the British regiments. It resulted that the battalions sailed with an average of not over 600 men in the ranks of each, save that the light battalion had been abnormally increased by adding to its seven companies 250 picked sharpshooters from the Corsican Rangers and the Royal Sicilian Volunteers, besides nearly 150 men from the battalion companies of the 35th regiment, called "flankers". For, by an evil device invented by Sir James Craig and discontinued next year by Sir John Moore, the regiments of the Mediterranean garrison, after having been skimmed already to make these light and grenadier battalions, were depleted again by some twenty of the best shots being chosen from each of the eight battalion companies to act as skirmishers, alias flankers. When the "flankers", as in this case, were deducted from a regiment as well as its grenadier and light companies, the remainder was left weak in numbers as well as in efficient men. It thus resulted that the light battalion (or the light brigade, as some called it) of Colonel Kempt was raised to very nearly 1,000 rank and file—of whom 320 were not British, viz. 70 men of de Watteville's battalion and 250 Corsicans and Sicilians.

The total rank and file of the expeditionary force, including the artillery, was 4,960 men; if we add the officers, whom Stuart omits in his return, after the tiresome custom then prevalent, which gave only rank and file, the force must have been about 5,200 strong of all ranks.[1] This exactly tallies with the report of Colonel Bunbury, the most accurate statistician among those who sailed from

[1] See table in Appendix (p. 70) of the regimental strengths.

Messina on June 29, 1806. That same officer adds, "the 1/27th was the only battalion of old soldiers; the flank companies of the 20th, 35th, and 61st were also hard biting fellows of old standing; but the 1/58th, 2/78th, and 1/81st were young regiments". Of de Watteville's regiment it must be said that Louis de Watteville, its war-tried colonel, and most of the officers were Swiss patriots, who had quitted their native land after its wanton conquest by the French in 1798, and that the core of the rank and file were old Swiss soldiers of a similar sort, but the corps had only been kept up to strength by enlisting prisoners and deserters, some Swiss, but many Germans and others, of doubtful zeal. The Corsican Rangers in a similar way were full of French deserters, and some doubt was felt as to their loyalty. But the Corsicans did fairly well in the end. Some of my readers may remember that Sir Hudson Lowe was long the colonel of this regiment, and that some wits or wiseacres accounted for his being made Napoleon's jailer in 1815 by observing that "he was accustomed to deal with refractory Corsicans and so chosen for this job".

The force was organized into four brigades, each of the absurdly small strength of two weak battalions, with an advanced guard composed of Kempt's light infantry. Of the rest, Acland's brigade consisted of the 2/78th and 1/81st, Cole's of the 1/27th and the grenadier battalion, Oswald's of the 58th, de Watteville's, and the 20th, which was expected to come up late, as it had been told to threaten a landing near Scilla, at the toe of the Calabrian promontory, in order to distract Reynier's attention. As a matter of fact it landed three days later than the rest of the army, on July 4th, the very day of the battle, yet arrived in time to take a distinguished part in the engagement. The expedition was convoyed by Sir Sidney Smith, who had with him one line-of-battle ship, the *Pompée*, and the *Apollo* frigate, with two smaller vessels of war. There was no French naval force in the neighbourhood which could threaten any harm.

The expeditionary force landed, quite unopposed, on a shingly beach, a mile below the high-lying village which gives its name to the Gulf of Santa Eufemia, on the dawn of July 1st. Calabrese peasants rowed out to the ships to warn Stuart that there were a few French troops in the neighbourhood, but no force that he need fear. The place of honour in the disembarkation should have fallen to the light battalion, but a large transport which carried Kempt and the British portion of that corps had not arrived at the rendezvous, so General Oswald started the landing with the 250 Corsican Rangers and seven companies from the 78th, 58th, and 81st. Oswald spread out his men, and advanced cautiously towards Santa Eufemia, through a scrubby wooded rising ground. When he had nearly reached it a brisk fire broke out in his front, and the Corsican Rangers were driven in by a rush of some three hundred of the enemy. This force consisted of three companies of Poles, who had just come up from Monteleone, and did their best to disconcert the landing party by a sudden attack. But, as Bunbury remarks, "they showed want of judgement in risking a contest in the wood; their true opportunity of doing us mischief was while our boats were struggling through the surf". They were driven back by the supports after a brief scuffle, in which they lost two officers and fifty men prisoners. It may seem incredible, but is stated, alike in the official report and in Bunbury's narrative and Boothby's diary, that Oswald's force lost only one sergeant wounded.

The victorious advanced guard then passed on, and took possession of Santa Eufemia, while the disembarkation was continuing. It was completed during the day, every man, gun, and artillery mule being ashore by the evening of July 1st. That evening the advanced guard took possession of the little town of Nicastro, five miles inland, which is the chief place of the district. The Calabrese showed great pleasure at the arrival of the expedition, and in the course of the next two days some 200 armed men joined the British; they are described by Bunbury as

'ruffians of the lowest type". The better class of inhabitants, though perfectly friendly, had not yet made up their minds to risk themselves, by taking up the cause of an ally whose force was small, and might (as they guessed) take to the sea again the moment that Reynier came up in full strength.

It is clear from the general strategic position of affairs that Stuart ought to have marched at once, to catch the enemy while he was still supposed to be in a state of complete dispersion. Every day that he remained stationary gave Reynier more opportunity to concentrate. Nevertheless, he lingered three days on the shore; the explanation given is that a heavy surf had sprung up on the night of July 1st, and that it was hard to get ashore the reserve ammunition, stores, and baggage animals. Meanwhile Stuart employed his time in throwing up an entrenchment on the beach. A ruined tower called the Bastione de Malta was taken as the centre of the work, and it was surrounded with a ditch and a semicircle of sandbags touching the shore at both ends.

Reynier meanwhile showed a very different sort of energy. His army was much less scattered than the British had supposed. At the moment that the expedition sailed he had seven of his ten battalions in the very toe of the Calabrian peninsula—two of the 1st Léger at Reggio, two of the 42nd Ligne at Pontemolle near Reggio, two of the 23rd Léger at Scilla, one of the 1st Swiss at Palmi, only eight miles north of Scilla. All his artillery were with him. To keep up his line of communications with the north and Naples he had only left his three Polish battalions and part of his cavalry, dotted at intervals along the road to Cassano. One battalion of the Poles was at Tropea, on the high road, thirty miles north of Palmi; another at Monteleone, ten miles farther up the road than Tropea, on the headland looking out into the Tyrrhenian Sea. It was three companies from this unit which had attacked Stuart's vanguard on the morning of the disembarkation—Monteleone is only about fifteen miles from Maida beach. Lastly, the 3rd battalion was far to the north, at Cosenza

with General Verdier. It had three companies detached at Cotrone (Croton), where the division had its central hospital. Of the 9th Chasseurs, one squadron was at Catanzaro on the east coast of Calabria, the other two were near the main body of the division at a place called Maddalone, which I cannot find on the map, but which must be somewhere in the Reggio direction. Thus when the British landed at Maida there lay north of them only one Polish battalion at Cosenza and Cotrone, and one Chasseur squadron at Catanzaro. Instead of cutting into the middle of Reynier's army Stuart had 8,000 of its 9,000 men south of him and only 1,000 north. It may be remarked, by the way, that Reynier in his dispatch says that he had but 7,000 men at the moment, of whom there were 1,000 out of reach at Cotrone and Cosenza. But his own morning state gives him the lie, as it shows 9,166 officers and men present on July 1st, three days before the battle. The news that a British fleet of transports had sailed north from Messina on the morning of June 30th started him off at once for the direction which the enemy had taken. He would not be cut off from Verdier, but would draw near his base and fight the British at once, unless they were in overwhelming force. "Five thousand men", as he pleasantly remarked, "were enough to thrust 6,000 or 7,000 English into the water."

So he threw 632 men from the 1st and 42nd into Reggio, and 281 of the 23rd into the Castle of Scilla, with a small contingent of artillery, and marched with 4,122 men remaining of these regiments, and his horse battery and two squadrons of cavalry, along the coast road to Maida. At Palmi he picked up the Swiss battalion 630 strong; at Tropea the 1st Polish battalion; at Monteleone the second —the one whose detachment had skirmished with Oswald on the 3rd—which gave him 1,600 men more. The Chasseur squadron from Catanzaro also rode across the peninsula and joined him, so that he had now his whole army assembled, save the one Polish battalion in the north and the garrisons that he had chosen to leave at Scilla and

Reggio; 7,000 of his total of 9,000 men were mobilized. He depleted himself, however, of a few additional men by leaving them at Tropea and Monteleone, as posts of connection, to keep him in communication with his southern garrisons—half a battalion of Poles and half a squadron of Chasseurs, 470 bayonets and 100 sabres. This reduced his fighting force to 6,440 men, though he underrated their numbers in his report, calling them a little over 5,000 in one place, 5,150 in another, and finally 5,360 in a third passage of his long report. There is no doubt, however, that 6,440 is the right number. The troops at Tropea and Monteleone he obviously thought would be useful for keeping down local Calabrese insurrection while he went, as he frankly confessed, with complete confidence to drive the English into the sea.

The field force, then, consisted of six French battalions or 4,122 men—the battalions averaging nearly 700 men, one Swiss battalion of 630 men and two weak Polish battalions with 937 men, each of these last having left a company or so at Tropea or Monteleone. The cavalry was about 328 sabres, the artillery consisted of one horse battery with sixty-two men. There were 311 men of the sappers and artillery train.[1] The total made 6,440 of all arms and ranks, and the two infantry brigades were commanded by Compère, who had the 1st Léger and 42nd, and Digonet, who led the 23rd Léger, the Swiss, and the Poles. The cavalry were under Peyri.

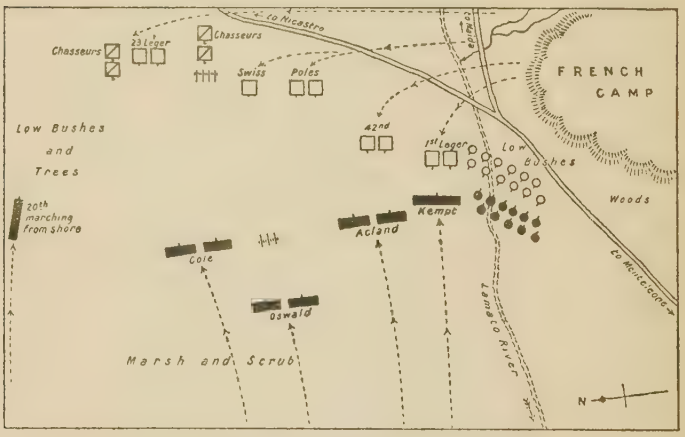
Reynier's march from Reggio to Maida had been very swift. The distance is about eighty miles, and he had covered it in three days, a fine achievement over bad Calabrian roads in scorching weather. In the corresponding three days Stuart had done no more than get his men ashore and seize Nicastro, which was only five miles from his landing-place. On the evening of July 3rd the two armies

[1] See table at end for the exact calculation. Where was the divisional field battery? Reynier denies its presence at the battle, yet it had been with him at Reggio, and had left behind only ten men at Scilla.

Lagonegro
Policastro
Gulf of Policastro
Cassano
Rossano
Cosenza
Strongoli
Amantea
Cotrone
Nicastro
St Eufemia
Catanzaro
Gulf of St Eufemia
Maida
Squillace
Monteleone
Tropea
Miléto
Nicotera
Palmi
Gerace
Scilla
Milazzo
Messina
Reggio
Cape Spartivento
Taormina
SICILY
CALABRIA

discovered each other; Stuart reconnoitring in person across the shore plain, with a company of grenadiers, perceived the French army just taking up its position on the heights below the village of San Pietro de Maida; Reynier ranging about with forty *chasseurs à cheval* saw the large British encampment on the shore; Bunbury says that the generals nearly met, having passed through the same thicket on the plain of Santa Eufemia within ten minutes of each other.

Next morning both sides, being equally confident, pre-



THE BATTLE OF MAIDA

pared to advance. Reynier thought he was strong enough to drive Stuart into the sea. Stuart had been told that Reynier had little over 3,000 men, and had not yet been joined by his outlying troops. If the one had not advanced the other would have done so; but Stuart started first, at daybreak, leaving four companies of de Watteville's regiment and three of his six field pieces to guard his camp on the shore, at the Bastione de Malta. Deducting this small force of 300 men, and the 20th regiment, which (except its grenadier and light companies) had not yet arrived, the British force consisted of pretty nearly 4,400

men, officers included. Stuart marched them in two columns along the shingly beach which separated his landing-place from the French camp below Maida. Kempt's light brigade led the inland column, with Cole's behind him; Acland led the inshore column, with Oswald following; the three field-guns were with this column; each brigade had two mule guns with it. As long as they were on the actual beach line Sidney Smith followed with the *Apollo* frigate and two other vessels, to cover the flank of the marching columns with his fire, in case the French should come down and fight close to the water, intending to drive the British force actually into the sea.

Stuart's purpose, as stated in his dispatch, was to attack the French camp on the heights of Maida, unless he was himself assailed meanwhile on the march. Reynier's position, he observes, was good, the front being protected by the shallow stream of the Lamato (everywhere fordable but still an impediment), while its flanks, especially that on the French right, were covered by thick underwood, impervious to formed troops. The left flank seemed the weaker point, and it was this that Stuart intended to attack, forcing the enemy, unless he should decide to fight in the plain, to form front to flank, in order to receive the British attack. The march of nine miles along the beach was very fatiguing, the column being compelled to shuffle along ankle-deep in shingle. The grenadier battalion, who had garrisoned Nicastro and had marched back five miles to join the main force, was especially jaded. It was a hot morning, so hot that there was a certain amount of mirage on the plain, and nothing could be made out clearly. The only touch with the enemy was produced by the fact that parties of French horse were continually seen riding parallel to the flank of Kempt's (the left) column. On reaching the mouth of the little river Lamato, Stuart had to change his direction and wheel inland, in order to approach (and outflank) the French position. This movement took him out of the protection of the guns of Sidney Smith's vessels, which could no longer help him when he turned inshore

The brigades now advanced in echelon, Kempt leading, then Acland, the late head of the inshore column, then Cole. Oswald, who was to form the reserve, with his weak force of eight companies of the 58th and four of de Watteville's regiment, only 850 men, was placed behind the interval between Cole and Acland. He had (as already mentioned) the three field guns with him. The march of two miles from the beach towards the French camp was far more fatiguing than the first seven miles, for the Lamato spreads out into marshes at its estuary, there was no road, save a track followed by Kempt, and many of the battalions were ankle-deep in black slime.

At this moment—it was now a quarter to nine—the whole face of affairs was changed by Reynier's army suddenly leaving its position and descending into the plain with remarkable celerity and admirable order. The French general, confident in his strength and exactly acquainted with the position of the British by means of his cavalry vedettes, had been intending to attack all along, but he had deliberately waited till Stuart should have advanced far enough from the sea to put him beyond the protection of the guns of the British squadron. He then descended upon his adversary, intending, as he says in his dispatch, "to make a vigorous charge, which should smash up a section of the enemy's force, so that the remainder would not be able to re-embark, and would have to surrender, especially the part which had been turning our left".[1]

Sending out his 300 cavalry and his horse artillery guns to cover his movement, Reynier came rushing down from his camp in three columns. The southern one was to give the main blow; it consisted of the two best French regiments, four battalions of the 1st Léger and the 42nd Line, veteran troops with an old record of victory from Bonaparte's first Italian campaigns. They counted in all 2,880

[1] "Par une charge vigoureuse écraser une partie de leur armée, ainsi que le reste ne pourroit alors se rembarquer, et devroit se rendre, surtout ceux qui auroient tourné ma gauche." Unpublished dispatch in the French Archives du Ministère de la Guerre.

men. The second column, intended to form a support for the first, or to continue its line northwards so as to form a centre for the army, was composed of the three foreign battalions, two of Poles, one of Swiss; it was much smaller than the first, counting only a little over 1,500 bayonets under General Peyri. The third column, which was led by Digonet, had a much fuller curve to make, in order to get into line; it was composed of the 1,250 bayonets of the two battalions of the 23rd Léger, and had the cavalry and guns attached to it—for Reynier's right was his weak point, being out in the open plain, and not covered (as was his left flank) by the wood lying below the French camp.

The three columns coming down the hill at the same moment, but having very different distances to cover in order to get into line, it soon resulted that the French army, like the British, fell into an echelon of brigades, with the left advanced, Compère leading, Peyri some way to his right flank and rear, and Digonet, again, some way to Peyri's right flank and rear, except that his cavalry and guns, which were already down in the low country, were far ahead of the whole of the rest of the army. These 300 sabres found themselves opposite Cole, on the left of the British line; they endeavoured to stop his progress by ostentatious preparations to charge, and brought up four horse guns to play upon him. Cole replied by changing from column into line, and bringing up the three British field guns of the reserve, which engaged in a harmless but noisy duel with the French battery. The result was that Cole's brigade got a little delayed, and that the echelon which it formed became separated by a considerable gap from Acland, the brigade next on its right.

Since Stuart was advancing with three brigades in echelon from the right, and Reynier with three brigades in echelon from the left, it was clear that Kempt and Compère would meet long before Acland faced Peyri, and that Acland and Peyri would be at close grips long before Cole came near Digonet's two infantry battalions. Oswald

was still far to the rear of Cole and Acland, as was indeed intended. This fact settled the general shape and course of the battle, which was fought in three separate sections, starting from the east and ending in the west.

Kempt, on seeing Compère's brigade descending from the hills, formed his seven British companies in line, and threw out his 250 Corsican and Sicilian sharpshooters on his right, to cover his flank and explore the scrubby thickets beyond the Lamato, which lay below the deserted French camp. The light battalion, according to the rules of regimental seniority, which were strictly observed, had the company of the 20th on the right, next it the two companies (flankers, etc.) of the 35th, next de Watteville's company in the centre, and finally the 61st, 58th, and 27th, the last on the extreme left.

Kempt had done well to cover his right with the Corsicans, for just as these had crossed the almost dry bed of the Lamato, and advanced among the bushes, they were charged by two companies of tirailleurs, whom Compère had placed under cover to protect his left flank. The Corsicans, receiving a sudden volley, broke and fell back into the open ground in disorder, followed by the French. But Kempt detached his two right companies, the light company of the 20th, and the "flankers" of the 35th, who crossed the Lamato, rallied the Corsicans, drove back the tirailleurs into the wood, and left the foreign light companies to "contain" them, while they themselves returned at the double to take their place on the right of the light battalion. They had hardly re-formed when the crash came.

The 1st Léger in two battalion columns was now coming down upon the right and centre of Kempt's line. Deducting the skirmishers on the eastern flank of each force, who were now bickering in the woods, the two French battalions had 1,600 men in line, the seven British companies only 700, so that the numerical advantage in favour of Compère was overwhelming. Neither side had any skirmishers out in their front, all having gone off to the flank. The ground was level and sandy, bounded by the shallow Lamato on

its western side. The two forces were quite isolated for the moment, though if Kempt looked to his left rear he could see Acland coming up with two battalions in line a quarter of a mile behind him, while if Compère looked to his right rear he could see the 42nd Ligne, also two battalions, coming on in column at a similar distance. The French 42nd, it may be remarked, had 1,046 men, Acland's 78th and 81st a decidedly superior force, the Highland regiment with about 700, the 81st with about 600 men in line. But Peyri with 1,500 Swiss and Poles was not very far in the rear of the 42nd. The rest of the troops on either side were almost hidden from the earlier combatants by the dust and the shimmering mirage which lay over the plain on a hot day.

The whole fate of the battle turned on the first clash of arms between Kempt and the 1st Léger. It was the fairest fight between column and line that had been seen since the Napoleonic wars began—on the one side two heavy columns of 800 men each, drawn up in column of companies, i.e. with a front of some sixty men each, and a depth of fourteen (each battalion having seven companies present). The front of each was not more than sixty yards. Kempt, on the other hand, had his battalion in line, two men deep only, so that, even deducting officers, sergeants, etc., he had a front of 350 yards, only 120 yards of which had Frenchmen directly in front of it. The two battalions of the 1st Léger being a little way apart, the 1st battalion faced the 35th flankers, the 2nd the light companies of the 81st and de Watteville. Be it noted that every man in the British line was a picked marksman (all being light company men), and that every one of them could use his musket against either the front or the flank of one of the two French columns. Of the 1st Léger, on the other hand, only 240 were in first or second line and therefore able to fire. But of course Compère, who was riding between his battalions with his Staff, had no notion whatever of winning by fire; he was, in his own estimation, about to break through the British line by sheer impact, as he had

broken through Austrians many a time in the old wars of Lombardy. His columns came down, a formidable sight from their depth and their rapid pace, looking like rolling boulders which must inevitably crash through the thin red wall in front of them. For Compère had put on full speed, knowing that the shorter time he was within musketry range the less would be his losses. The trumpets were all blaring and the men shouting, "*Vive l'Empereur! À la baïonnette*".[1] Kempt, on the other hand, halted as the enemy drew near: "Steady light infantry. Wait for the word. Let them come close." And then, when the columns were within half musket shot only: "Now fire!" What followed was a puzzle to Compère and Reynier, a surprise even to the British themselves. The French received three volleys, at 150 yards, 80 yards, and 20 yards. The first laid low almost the whole first line, but the mass still came on. The second tore well into the heart of the disordered crowd, whose impetus was still carrying it forward. The third turned the whole to flight. Reynier, who was watching from the rear, writes in his dispatch: "The English remained with ported arms till the 1st Léger came within half musket shot; they then opened a tremendous fire, which did not at first stop the charge, but when the columns were only fifteen paces from the hostile line and could have broken it by one more thrust, the soldiers of the 1st turned their backs and ran to the rear all together." He thought that he had been beaten because his men had flinched at the last moment. So did Compère, who actually rode into the British line, with one bullet in his shoulder and another in his left arm, "and was captured, menacing with the action of his other arm, and cursing and swearing with the most voluble bitterness".[2]

Reynier ought to have known better what to expect; he had seen the battles in front of Alexandria, but evidently

[1] Boothby, p. 77.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 79. In Colonel de Watteville's notes it is mentioned that he was shot by a man of the light company of the Swiss regiment, who had taken a deliberate aim at him.

had not learnt the lesson which they might have taught him; there, indeed, line and column had not been pitted against each other with the beautiful simplicity that was witnessed at Maida. What is odd is that even Maida did not teach him the truth. Three years later he tried the same old tactics at Bussaco, with equally disastrous results, so that Bonaparte exclaimed: "Ney and Masséna had never seen the English before; but that Reynier, whom they have already thrashed twice, should have attacked in this way is simply astounding."[1] Even after his Calabrian experiences he remained with the comforting belief that a courageous column could smash any line, and that if the experiment did not come off it was the fault of faint hearts in the rank and file.

Of the purely physical aspect of the attack of column on line I have already spoken. Eight hundred men in line cover more than twice the front of 1,600 in column, and can put in 700 shots per volley against 240, and that at a target which even with Brown Bess it was hard to miss at 100 yards. But the physical aspect of the affair is only one side of it. There remains the moral. What did the men in the column feel while attacking the line? That is harder to find, for not one Frenchman in a hundred thousand wrote down his mental experiences of the trial. One did, however, and though he wrote, not of what he saw at Maida (where he did not serve), but of memories of Castalla and of other fields in Spain, the moral is so much the same that I may be permitted to quote his text:

"Why did we engage in so many general actions during the seven years that I was in the Peninsula," wrote Marshal Bugeaud, "and never get the better of the English save in an insignificant number? The reason was plain enough. We attacked them, without bearing in mind that tactics which answered well enough against the Spaniards and others, failed with an English force in front. The usual matter-of-fact cannonade would commence the operation. then hurriedly, without reconnoitring the ground, we

[1] See Foy's autobiography, p. 108.

marched against the enemy, 'taking the bull by the horns'; as men say.

"As soon as we got about 1,000 metres from the English line, the men would begin to get restless and excited. They exchanged ideas with each other, the march began to get somewhat precipitate. Meanwhile the English, silent and impassive, with ported arms loomed like a long red wall—an imposing attitude which impressed novices a good deal. Soon the distance diminishes; cries of *'Vive l'Empereur!' 'En Avant', 'À la baïonnette'* broke from the mass. Some men hoisted their shakos on the top of their muskets. The march turned into a run. The ranks began to get mixed up. The men's agitation became a tumult; some discharged their weapons without halting and without aim. And all the while the red line in front, silent and motionless, though we had got within 300 metres, seemed unaffected by the gathering storm.

"The contrast was striking; more than one among us began to think that when the enemy's long-reserved fire *did* begin it might be inconvenient presently. Our ardour began to cool. The moral influence of apparently unshakable calm is irresistible, in action against disorder which strives to make up by noise what it lacks in firmness. It used to sit heavy on our hearts. Then, at the time of most painful expectancy, the English muskets would come down —they were 'making ready'. An undefinable impression nailed to the spot a good many of our men, who would halt and open a desultory fire. Then came that of the enemy, volleyed with precision and deadly effect, crashing upon us like thunder. Decimated, we turned half round, staggering under the blow and trying to regain our balance, when the long-pent-up silence of the enemy was broken by cheers. Then came a second volley, and perhaps a third, and with the third they were down upon us, pressing us into a disorderly retreat."[1]

The fact was that a column, with its two first ranks and

[1] Note of Marshal Bugeaud, quoted in Trochu's *Armée Française en 1867.*

half its flanks (which were exposed because of its narrow frontage) blown to pieces, was in a miserable plight. It speaks well for the 1st Léger at Maida that they stood three volleys, and that even from one battalion a few desperate men staggered on to cross bayonets with the two companies of the 35th and the "light bobs" of the 20th. There is said to have occurred in this quarter a little of that rarest of things in the Napoleonic Wars—bayonet fighting.

The British light infantry, with a headlong impetus, charged straight after the flying mass, which scattered and went up-hill in the direction of the French camp. This was the sort of pursuit that Wellington would never have allowed: his rule was to re-form before doing anything more. But Kempt forgot or failed to restrain his men; they went up-hill, shooting or making prisoners of all the slow runners among their adversaries. The 1st Léger was absolutely half destroyed; of 1,810 present at Maida only 953 were under arms when the next regimental muster was taken a month later. Four hundred and thirty were prisoners,[1] four hundred and twenty-seven were killed or wounded there—176 of the former, 254 of the latter apparently. Of sixty officers present only thirty-five survived at the roll-call of September 18th; seven were killed, fourteen wounded, one an unwounded prisoner.

The rout and pursuit swept through the French camp, along the hill-side beyond, and for a mile or more; till, at the village of Maida, Kempt at last succeeded in checking and rallying his scattered men. Undoubtedly they had done their share in the battle, but the rest of it went on without their aid; they were a "spent force", and took no further part in the action, when their intervention might have had incalculable results. For want of a general directing mind each section of the British army fought its own battle apart.

We must now return to the plain by the Lamato. At

[1] In September the regiment acknowledges 562 prisoners, but 133 of these were taken at Reggio later on.

the very minute when the 1st Léger had begun to break up and retire, the second echelon on each side had come into action. Acland with the 78th and 81st got level with Kempt's original front at the very moment that the French 42nd Ligne came up on the flank of the 1st Léger. Here the British brigade had the advantage in numbers, having 1,300 men against 1,050, so that the victory of the line over the column would have been much more easy even if the disaster to Compère's first echelon had not had its effect. The firing began at 300 yards; the French battalions advanced till they had received two shattering volleys, and then broke up and fell back, demoralized, as it appears, as much by the sight of the disaster to the 1st Léger on the left as by their own losses. Reynier merely writes that "the 42nd saw the flight of the 1st Léger, and at a moment when they were only at a very short distance from the enemy commenced to hesitate, and followed the example of the other regiment". They had not suffered nearly so much. Of 1,046 bayonets present they had 656 left at the next regimental muster—much more than half. They had three officers killed and nine wounded out of forty-three present. Of the men, it seems that 379 were lost, of whom 250 were left wounded on the field—figures that show a far less bitter fight than that of the 1st Léger.

The 42nd retired, not like its left-hand neighbour up the hill-side, but along the Catanzaro road, directly in its own rear. Acland, following the routed regiment for some way, soon came into contact with its supports, the three foreign battalions—900 Poles and 600 Swiss, a fresh force outnumbering him by 200 men. Here he had a second but a very short fight to sustain—the Poles broke at the first shock, though Reynier himself had ridden up to them and was using all his efforts to keep them steady. Their rout was disgraceful—their casualty list shows only one officer hit but four taken prisoners unwounded: of the men, it would appear that nearly 250 were captured, nearly all without a wound. This was the work of the 81st, while the Highland regiment at their side got engaged with the

Swiss. This battalion was dressed in red, like all the other Swiss corps in the French army. According to the regimental history of the 78th, they were at first mistaken by the Scots for de Watteville's Swiss regiment of the British force, whose uniform was very similar. They were allowed to approach within a very short distance, and their first volley did the 78th much harm and even forced it to recoil. But after ten minutes of close fighting the Swiss gave back—though not in disorder, and fell off towards their right. Acland did not pursue them, and they took refuge with Digonet's troops on the west end of the field, where they rallied and re-formed. Acland was prevented from moving after them by the French cavalry. According to Bunbury, he was threatened at this moment by one or two squadrons of *chasseurs à cheval* and two guns. His battalions being much disordered by the two fights that they had gone through, the brigadier bade them form squares, and kept them halted for some time under artillery fire, by which they sustained some loss. When the French cavalry moved off, it was found that the battle on the left, no less than on the right, was over. Acland's brigade suffered, in its two successive victories over the 42nd and the three foreign battalions, a heavier loss than any other part of the British army. The 2/78th had eighty-five killed and wounded, the 1/81st eighty-four—together more than half the total loss at Maida, which only came to 327 casualties.

We must now pass on to the left wing. Cole's brigade, composed of the 27th and the six grenadier companies, had been detained in its advance by the demonstration of the French cavalry, and therefore only reached the battle-ground twenty minutes after Kempt and Acland had come into action. Cole then found himself in front of Reynier's right, which had been delayed, like himself, by the distance it had to cover in descending from the camp. This body consisted of the two battalions of the 23rd Léger, 1,260 bayonets, and (unless I am mistaken) of the rallied Swiss battalion which had retired from Acland's front.

Here, too, were French cavalry and four horse guns. Cole had with him about 1,300 men and the three field guns of the army. He had also in his rear Oswald's reserve, eight companies of the 58th and four of de Watteville's regiment, which were available for his help as they were not needed elsewhere. In this part of the field, therefore, the British, when Oswald came up a quarter of an hour later, had a slight superiority of numbers, apparently 2,200 infantry and three guns, against 1,800 infantry, two squadrons (about 200 men) of cavalry, and four guns. But they were terribly handicapped by their entire want of horse. Every time the Chasseurs threatened a charge Cole had to prepare to form square and lost time. Digonet, the French officer who commanded in this part of the field, had deployed the 23rd on one side of his guns, the Swiss battalion on the other, and stood on the defensive on a slightly rising ground. He threw his two tirailleur companies into the rough bushy ground on his right, and tried to encircle with them the left flank of the 27th regiment, while a squadron of cavalry followed the tirailleurs to protect them from any scattered advance of Cole's skirmishers. There resulted a fierce frontal fire-engagement between the 27th and grenadiers on one side and the two battalions of the French 23rd on the other; both suffered severely. Presently Oswald came up with his 850 men and into a similar bicker with the Swiss. The four French and three English guns seem to have paired off against each other, while the 9th Chasseurs were threatening Cole's left. The battle seemed to be standing still; yet Reynier was, as a matter of fact, only fighting a rear-guard action, as he himself confesses, in order to allow his routed left time to get off. If he had ordered an advance, or tried to turn the English left, he says that the 23rd Léger would have been smashed up (*abîmé*).

At this moment the battle came to a sudden end by the unexpected arrival of a small additional British force. The 20th regiment, or rather its eight weak "battalion companies", about 600 men, had arrived too late to join in the

march of the main army. By the advice of Sir Sidney Smith, who came out to meet their three transports on his frigate, Colonel Ross landed not where the first disembarkation had taken place, but near the mouth of the Lamato, directly behind the battle-field and two miles from it. As the landing began, the firing in front made itself heard, and Ross, leaving his last men still on shipboard, for the disembarkation was very difficult owing to the heavy surf on the shore, hurried off across the marsh. On his way to the front he fell in with Bunbury, Stuart's Quarter-Master General, who told him that he could strike in to the best effect by coasting along behind Cole's line and turning the French extreme right in the bushy tract which lay beyond it. He did so, and, thrusting aside a few tirailleurs, found himself looking down the French line, with a squadron of Chasseurs just in front of him which was demonstrating against the left of the 27th regiment. Ross, forming line in the bushes as best he could, delivered a volley at fifty yards against the cavalry, which sent them in confusion to the rear. He then emerged from his shelter, and advanced, forming in line against the flank of the nearer battalion of the French 23rd. This finished the day. The enemy were already yielding before Cole's and Oswald's fire—the latter had just come up, and was getting into effective action at the same moment that the 20th appeared from the bushes. Reynier gave the order for an instant retreat, and his last three battalions went off across the open plain to the east, covered by the two remaining squadrons of the Chasseurs and the four horse guns. "If we had owned 200 good cavalry we should have destroyed the whole of them," writes Bunbury, "but we could do little more with our jaded infantry. We followed them until they abandoned the plain of Maida, and retreated rapidly up the valley through which runs the road to Catanzaro."

The French right wing had suffered severely, though not in the same proportion as their left. The 23rd Léger had two officers killed, eight wounded, and one taken prisoner without a wound. Of 1,200 bayonets present at Maida,

780 were effective in September—they had left ninety-one prisoners behind, and had about eighty killed and 250 wounded. Their Swiss auxiliaries suffered in about the same proportion to their number, with their 106 prisoners and 100 killed and wounded, more than a third of their number. The 300 Chasseurs had one officer killed, thirty-five prisoners, no doubt men whose horses had been shot, and about thirty killed and wounded.

So ended the Battle of Maida. You will notice that I have not had occasion to mention Sir John Stuart once during the narrative, though Reynier's name is perpetually occurring. The explanation seems to be simply that he allowed the battle to fight itself, and gave no further orders after he had once launched his echelon of brigades against the French. His Quarter-Master General, Bunbury, writes as follows:

"But where was Sir John Stuart? And what part did he play in this brilliant action? To say the truth, he seemed to be rather a spectator than the person most interested in the result of the conflict. He formed no plan; he declared no intention; and scarcely troubled himself to give a single order. Perfectly regardless of personal danger, he was cantering about the field, indulging himself in little pleasantries, as was his wont. He launched forth with particular glee when a Sicilian *marchese*, whom he had brought as an extra aide-de-camp, betook himself to shelter from fire behind a haystack. But after the charge of Kempt's light infantry and the utter rout of the French left wing a change came over the spirit of Sir John. He still dawdled about, but broke into passionate exclamations: 'Begad, I never saw a thing so glorious as this! There was nothing in Egypt to equal it! It's the finest thing that I ever witnessed.' From that moment he was an altered man, full of visions of coming greatness; as I found that I could get no orders from him, I made it my own business to go round to the leaders of brigades, to give them what information they wanted."

This picture of fussy incompetence, written by a man

whom Stuart himself in his dispatches praises for his zeal and activity, is probably little exaggerated. For Sir John's subsequent actions give evidence of the most extraordinary want of military insight and enterprise—as we shall soon see. His first order was that there should be no pursuit, and that the whole army should return to the beach for repose, save Kempt's light infantry, who were completely out of call; but orders were sent to search for them in the Maida direction and to bring them back. They only returned next morning, and not all of them then, for the light company of the 20th under Colborne, who had been directed by Kempt to go ahead and keep touch with the flying enemy till the main army should come up, had outstripped its commander and continued to dog the steps of the demoralized French, not only on the afternoon of the 4th but for the whole of July 5th, till it reached the town of Borgia, right on the other side of the Calabrian peninsula and only ten miles from Catanzaro, where Reynier finally rallied his routed host. Then, hearing that not a man was following in his support, Colborne had to turn back.

Sir John Stuart spent the evening of his victory in dining on board Sidney Smith's flagship the *Pompée*, where he received many compliments, heard the whole story of the siege of Acre from his self-centred voluble entertainer, and was finally invested with a shawl of honour, after the Oriental fashion, by his host. At daybreak he re-landed, and marched his force to Maida and the French camp, where a certain amount of valuable camp equipage was picked up. Stuart slept at Maida that eve, having (according to his Quarter-Master General) spent the greater part of the day in the agonies of composition of his dispatch. This seems corroborated by the fact that it is dated on the mroning of July 6th, while the battle had taken place on the morning of the 4th. Bunbury bitterly remarks that for forty-eight hours after the victory the whole army was kept "kicking their heels and eating grapes about the hill-sides of Maida", while the enemy was on his way

towards a place of safety, unmolested save by the brigands of the hills.

Stuart's losses, which he carefully sums up in his dispatch, had been astoundingly small. One officer only had been killed, a Captain McLean of the 20th light company, who had served in Kempt's battalion. I know no other case where a battle of such importance was fought with the loss of one single officer to the winners. There were also the moderate number of forty-four men killed, and thirteen officers and 269 men wounded—a total casualty list of 327. It is notable to see how the losses were distributed; Kempt had fifty-nine killed and wounded, including the Corsicans. Acland showed by far the heaviest proportional losses in the whole army—169 killed and wounded, more than half the total list. Cole had eighty-four casualties, while Oswald and the 20th, who came up only at the very end of the fight, lost five and seven men respectively.

Still, it is an astounding fact that with a loss of 327 men Stuart's troops had killed, wounded, or taken a full 2,000 Frenchmen. Reynier in his dispatch acknowledges a loss of 1,300, but this figure is too low. He had sixteen officers killed, forty wounded, and apparently eight[1] unwounded prisoners; of rank and file a full 900 were prisoners—more than half of them wounded—nearly 500 were killed (Stuart says that he had buried 700, but this is probably inaccurate, for that number of killed would by all battle averages presuppose at least 2,800 wounded, and the French lost nothing like that total). The full number of wounded who were not captured must have been about 900, for 200 were afterwards taken at Cotrone, and Reynier had 500 in his hospitals on September 1st over and above his normal sick. Besides these we must allow for deaths and recoveries in August. If we put the total loss at 2,000 and a trifle over, we are certainly very near the mark.

Reynier's dispatch, which he wrote at Catanzaro on July 5th—twenty-four hours before Stuart got his com-

[1] I have discovered their names at the Record Office—one Staff-officer, four Poles, one each from the 1st and 23rd Léger.

pleted—is a curious document, in that he shows no notion whatever of the reason why he was beaten. He throws all the blame on his men; he had, he says, only 5,350 men (understating by a thousand), but that ought to have sufficed to throw 6,000 or 7,000 English into the sea. He thinks he acted for the best, "but I was not well seconded either by the number or the morale of the troops. Many of the soldiers did not conduct themselves with the vigour of regiments who had so distinguished themselves in earlier battles. A part of them are still so demoralized that I could not count on their standing in face of the enemy again. Combien je suis malheureux d'avoir été abandonné par mes troupes au moment où elles devroient décider la victoire." And then he proceeds to say that they will disgrace themselves, if not strengthened at once by reinforcements whose morale is intact. He had no news from Verdier at Cosenza; his only hope was in prompt aid from Naples. Of the character of the English tactics or the effectiveness of their fire there is not a word. All blame is thrown on the cowardice of the rank and file.

César Berthier, Joseph Napoleon's Chief of the Staff at Naples, found an easier way to account for Reynier's defeat than did that general himself. He had the effrontery to write to Napoleon that there were 9,000 English at Maida, and that they had already been joined before the battle by 3,000 or 4,000 Calabrese brigands. "Ils étaient treize mille et nous avions cinq mille et cinquante!" His 9,000 British were manufactured by counting as present every battalion quartered in Sicily, crediting Stuart with the 35th, 61st, and Corsican Rangers, whose light companies only were with Kempt, and with the 39th and Chasseurs Britanniques, of whom not a man sailed at all. Moreover, Ross's disembarkation during the action is said to have brought 2,500 men to Stuart, in addition to his other forces —it really, as we saw, consisted of 600 bayonets, one depleted battalion. But that was the way in which history was written to please Napoleon. He did not, however, believe it, since he read the London papers with deep

interest and generally believed them when it came to a conflict of evidence. I have noted several clear examples of this—especially after Talavera.

After Maida had been fought the campaign took a most strange aspect. I know of no other war in which, after a decisive victory, the victors and the vanquished turned their backs on each other and proceeded to place 150 miles between them. That Reynier should turn northward from Catanzaro and fight his way along the east-coast road towards his base at Naples was but natural. The peasantry were already up all over northern Calabria, and Stuart might be manœuvring (for all Reynier knew) to go north by the west-coast road, and place himself between Catanzaro and Naples. He soon found that this was not the case, yet continued to fall back, harassed but not seriously harmed, by the "Masse", as the insurgents called themselves. By the first days of August he was in the Basilicata at Cassano, where he was, as he found, in safety. But when we reflect that it took him nearly a month to get to Cassano, and that Stuart could have taken a road via Cosenza, which was fifty miles shorter than that of Reynier, we see that there was every chance for the British commander to cut him off.

Stuart had three choices before him on the day after Maida. There was the obvious and immediate plan of either following Reynier hot-foot to Catanzaro, or marching by Cosenza to cut him off from his retreat. If either alternative had been adopted, it would probably have resulted in the complete destruction of the French division. Secondly, a less obvious but a grander scheme presented itself. The whole object of divisions in Calabria should have been to draw off the French from the great task which they had in hand—Masséna's siege of Gaeta, which had been making such a splendid defence for six months and was detaining in front of it the largest section of the French army. What if Stuart and Sidney Smith, leaving Reynier to force his way as best he could through the insurgents, and treating him as a negligible quantity—which he was—had tried to do something for the relief of Gaeta?

I am here taking up Bunbury's suggestion, which seems to me absolutely conclusive. If Sidney Smith had sailed with his squadron for Gaeta, announced the victory, and landed his marines, if he had used his energy to hearten up the long-deserted garrison of the Prince of Hesse-Philipsthal, if at the same time Stuart with his transports had arrived in front of Naples and presented himself before the city, after making a base in Capri, the isle in front of it, which was in British hands, it is practically certain that King Joseph, who had only 3,000 men with him, would either have abandoned Naples—which was seething with discontent and ready to rise—or have called on Masséna to help him. But Masséna could not have helped him (having only 12,000 or 15,000 men), save by raising the siege of Gaeta, which would have meant the abandonment of all northern Naples and general insurrection in the Abruzzi, Molise, and Campania. In either case the result would be splendid—either the capture of Naples, or the raising of the siege of Gaeta.

What Sidney Smith and Stuart found to do was something very different. The naval hero went off to make a dash at the insignificant Castle of Scilla on the Straits of Messina. He was beaten off with loss by the garrison of 250 men, the place being impregnable on the side of the sea. No news was sent to Gaeta. What Stuart did was to make up his mind, in his own words, "to begin a march southwards, preparatory to returning to Sicily". He actually handed over the Calabrias to his brigand allies, and devoted himself during the next fortnight to a march back to the Straits, sweeping up on the way the garrisons that Reynier had left in southern Calabria. The half-battalion of Poles at Monteleone surrendered to him without firing a shot; so did the single company at Tropea. Reggio, where there were 600 men of the 23rd and 42nd in a weak medieval castle, gave in almost as easily. There only remained the inaccessible fastness of Scilla, which gave more trouble, as it lay on a rocky point connected with the land by a narrow isthmus. The governor held out until heavy guns had been

hoisted with infinite trouble to a commanding point on the mainland, and then laid down his arms on July 23rd. There were now no more French in southern Calabria, and the bag of prisoners had been swollen by 1,300 men. Even this was ultimately increased, for Stuart sent the 78th regiment by sea to pounce on Cotrone, on the east coast of central Calabria, where Reynier's last outlying post, his central hospital guarded by 250 Poles, had been left isolated. The governor surrendered at once, and some 600 men, sick or hale, were sent to Messina. Of Reynier's whole division, after this last disaster, there were left only 4,681 effective and 1,106 sick, out of 9,191 effective and 689 sick who had existed on July 1st. Four thousand one hundred and three men had disappeared, of whom 2,732 were prisoners, and the rest dead or deserters.

But what was the use of this, when the news arrived that Gaeta had surrendered on July 18th, a full fortnight after Maida, when its governor had been mortally wounded, and its garrison reduced to complete demoralization. Masséna's army was set free; he marched to deliver King Joseph from the danger of insurrection in Naples city, and then detached 8,000 men to join Reynier and Verdier, whose position was thus made secure. There was an end to any general scheme for the reconquest of Naples, and the English abandoned Calabria to the enemy, who nevertheless took many months to subdue the fierce but ill-led bands of the mountaineers, even when they were unsupported by a single British soldier. It was not till the next year that the French had, after infinite trouble, got back to the position that Reynier had held in July 1806. Meanwhile the better part of the English army of Sicily had been sent out on the unhappy second Egyptian campaign, which proved such a fiasco under General Frazer.

The Maida campaign then had, as its sole good result, the confirming in the minds of the more intelligent British officers who had taken part in it, of the great truth of the superiority of line tactics over column tactics. It was of no small importance that a very appreciable number

of the men who were to take an honourable part in the Peninsular War had their first experience of fighting on a considerable scale on the Calabrian shore. We have already noted the names of Cole, the celebrated leader of the 4th division all through the Spanish War; of Kempt and Oswald, who afterwards commanded brigades in Spain, the former at Waterloo also; especially of Colborne, who, as a brigadier, fought so desperately at Albuera, and made the final attack on the French Guard at Waterloo, also of Ross, a distinguished officer in the Peninsula, but better remembered as the captor of Washington. It was invaluable to the British army, two years later, to have many officers of high rank who had been eye-witnesses of this first typical clash of line with column, and who could foresee from experience what would be the result of the application of similar tactics on the battle-fields of Spain and Portugal.

APPENDIX

STRENGTH AND LOSSES OF THE BRITISH ARMY AT MAIDA

Brigades and Battalions.		Present.		Killed.		Wounded.	
		Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.	Officers.	Men.
Kempt's advanced guard	Light battalion of 7 companies of 20th, 1/27th, 1/35th, 1/58th, 1/61st, 1/81st, and de Watteville's regiment ..	25	510	1	7	1	42
	Flankers of 1/35th	8	151				
	Corsican Rangers (2 companies) ..	14	258	—	3	—	5
	Volunteers of Sicily (1 company) ..						
Cole's 1st Brigade	1/27th (8 companies)	27	754	—	6	—	47
	Grenadier battalion of 6 companies of 20th, 1/27th, 1/36th, 1/58th, 1/81st, and de Watteville's	21	464	—	4	1	26
Acland's 2nd Brigade	2/78th (10 companies)	36	702	—	4	7	74
	1/81st (8 companies)	33	570	—	19	2	63
Oswald's 3rd Brigade	1/58th (8 companies)	22	554	—	—	—	2
	de Watteville's (4 companies[1]) left at base)	16	271	—	—	—	3
	20th regiment (8 companies)	27	597	—	1	—	6
	Artillery (minus ½ battery left at base) [2]	7	129	—	—	—	3
	Total	236	4,960	1	44	11	271

[1] Four companies, 13 officers and 239 men, were left to guard the base depot at the Bastione de Malta, where the army landed.

[2] Two officers, 81 men and 3 guns, left with the above named companies of de Watteville's at the base depot.

STRENGTH OF THE FRENCH ARMY AT MAIDA

Return of July 1st

	Effective.		Detached.	Total at Maida.	Brigade Total.
	Officers.	Men.			
Brigade Compère — 1st Léger	66	1,877	133 at Reggio	1,810	2,856
Brigade Compère — 42nd Ligne	64	1,423	441 at Reggio	1,046	
Brigade Digonet — 23rd Léger	61	1,462	250 at Scilla	1,266	2,203
Brigade Digonet — 1st Polonais	88	2,465	7 at Reggio 896 at Cosenza 100 at Tropea 370 at Monteleone 250 at Cotrone	937	
Brigade Peyri — 1st Swiss	35	595	—	630	958
Brigade Peyri — 9th Chasseurs à cheval	30	428	130 at Tropea	328	
Artillery — Horse	4	65	14 at Reggio	55	112
Artillery — Foot	4	63	10 at Scilla	57	
Sappers and Train	8	453	150 at Reggio, Cosenza, and Scilla	311	411
Total	360	8,831	2,651	6,440	6,440

The division had, above these figures, at the same time 689 men in hospital, 48 on leave, and 7 prisoners.

STRENGTH OF FRENCH ARMY AT MAIDA—(*continued*)

Return of September 18th

	Effective.		Detached.	Total Serving.	Prisoners of War.
	Officers.	Men.			
Brigade Compère { 1st Léger	35	918	—	953	562
Brigade Compère { 42nd Ligne	27	629	—	656	695
Brigade Digonet { 23rd Léger	36	789	—	825	348
Brigade Digonet { 1st Polonais	39	1,179	—	1,218	720
Brigade Peyri { 1st Swiss	34	498	—	532	102
Brigade Peyri { 9th Chasseurs à cheval	21	254	—	265	35
Artillery { Horse	4	63	—	67	} 20
Artillery { Foot	5	41	—	46	
Sappers and Train	5	104	—	109	250?[1]
Total	206	4,475	—	4,671	2,732

The division had, above these figures, at the same time 1,106 sick and wounded. Adding these, and deducting the total 7,413 from the total 9,928 of July 1st, it results that 1,405 are dead or deserters.

[1] Number not given in the French archives, but 250 is a probable figure, since the total of sappers and train had gone down from 461 to 109 between July and September.

IV

A DUEL OF 1807

EVERYONE is aware that, despite of all attempts to stop it, the practice of duelling lingered on in the British Army down to the fourth decade of the XIXth century, and many will remember, as almost the last incident in its distressing annals, the scandalous trial before his peers of Lord Cardigan, for the shooting of Captain Tuckett. The leader of the Charge of the Light Brigade was acquitted, on the technical point that the indictment charged him with wounding a Captain Harvey Tuckett, while the prosecution proved that he had shot a Captain James Garnett Harvey Tuckett, and had neglected to prove that the two names connoted only one person. That the Peers could venture to join in this obvious conspiracy to defeat the ends of justice, sufficiently shows how strong was the sentiment in favour of the duellist as late as 1840. It was only eleven years before that the Duke of Wellington himself, though he had done all in his power to stop duelling in the Peninsular Army, had yielded to the spirit of his generation, and "gone out" with Lord Winchelsea in Battersea Fields, to exchange deliberately harmless shots over the question of Catholic Emancipation.

It is, therefore, curious and interesting to find the first case of execution of a successful duellist on a charge of simple murder going back as far as the year 1807—more than 30 years before that conviction of Lieutenant Munro, for killing his brother-in-law Colonel Fawcett, which is generally quoted as the crucial case showing the final decision of public opinion on the subject. It adds to our

surprise to find the condemnation taking place in Ireland, the region in the United Kingdom where duelling was most frequent and popular during its last half-century of survival, and eight years before Daniel O'Connell's fatal duel with D'Esterre, which brought the orator nothing but credit in the eyes of his friends, though it gave him some pangs of conscience as a pious Catholic.

The story of this sad affair of 1807, a most perfect instance of morbid psychology and silly touchiness on the "point of honour", is best told in a rare pamphlet,[1] published in vindication of her husband by the widow of the survivor of the duel, after his execution. It contains his dying statement concerning its circumstances, written down after his friends' appeal for a reprieve had been finally refused by the King himself. And the tale goes so far in showing that he was even more to blame for the tragedy than the "less unfortunate gentleman who fell by his hand", that I think it may be taken as an honest statement of his case. So much of the altercation which led to the duel had taken place out of the hearing of any witnesses, that there was no evidence save that of the survivor for what happened. And in 1808 he could not, of course, go into the box to offer himself for cross-examination, so that his version was never given, and the sentence was passed on him on the depositions of persons none of whom had seen more than one or two episodes of the unhappy quarrel.

In June 1807 the second battalion of the Royal North British Fusiliers was quartered at Newry. It was a new unit, raised, like so many other second battalions, after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens. It had not yet seen any service, save garrison duty in Ireland, since it was first raised at Ayr in 1804. Among the senior officers of the 2/21st were Brevet-Major Alexander Campbell and Captain

[1] "A Short Vindication of the Memory of the late Major Alexander Campbell, of the 21st Regiment of Foot: containing the only full and particular account of the circumstances preceding and attending his unfortunate duel with Captain Alexander Boyd, of the same Regiment," etc. Edinburgh and London. 1810.

Alexander Boyd, both married men, and the fathers respectively of four and of three children. Each had his family residing in the town, in lodgings not far from the barracks.

Their age and rank and responsibilities should have made both of them incapable of starting a duel of a most irregular and atrocious kind, which would have been unpardonable even in the most feather-headed subalterns. Obviously the origin of it lay in incompatibilities of temper; and a trivial dispute at mess, when the wine was in and the wits were out, only let loose a dislike that must have been simmering for months. Campbell was "a Highland gentleman jealous of his honour", and thought that Boyd was no gentleman. As the pamphlet puts it, "the Captain having raised himself, by his own merit, to the rank which he held, was more punctiliously jealous, perhaps, of his personal consideration than one to whom such a station had long been familiar: he was probably less accustomed to govern and repress his feeling than those are who have always been subjected to the restraints of refined society". Neither of the officers was a professional duellist of the type not uncommon in the early XIXth century; but Campbell, as the pamphlet confesses, "had once on occasion of grievous provocation lifted his hand against the life of a fellow-creature"; and Boyd "had recently been engaged in several affairs that threatened to have ended in bloodshed", but all had been settled by the intervention of other officers—in one case, by an odd chance, by the mediation of Campbell himself. "Though his worth and honour were universally acknowledged, his temper was generally considered unsafe and impetuous."

On the evening of June 23rd the brigadier in command of the district, General Kerr, had been dining at the Mess of the 2/21st. He left very early, as did Colonel Adam and many other officers. Of those that remained few "drank fair", and all but four finally drifted away. These four were Campbell, Boyd, a Lieutenant Hall, and Mr. Adams, the assistant surgeon of the battalion. It was proved that but little wine for so large a company appeared to have

been consumed; but those who remained to the last got more than their share; and, as Campbell writes, "it is true that we were on that fatal evening a little elevated with drink". The conversation had got on to pure "shop"—Boyd and Campbell fell to discussing drill, and more especially an order which the Brigadier had corrected at the inspection that morning. Boyd said that General Kerr, and Campbell also, had been wrong. They argued on this trivial subject for some time, till both grew somewhat warm and noisy, and at last the captain said: "*I know better than you, Major Campbell, and you may take that as you choose*". The words, according to the witnesses, were spoken in an irritating manner. Campbell rose from his seat, and, approaching the other, said: "Then, Captain Boyd, you say that I am wrong?" To which Boyd replied: "I do say that you are wrong. I know that I am right according to the King's Regulations". Upon which Major Campbell walked out of the room.

It seems almost incredible that the lives of two middle-aged officers of long service should have been lost over a dispute on a small technical point, which could have been settled in two minutes by a reference to "Dundas", of which many copies must have been lying about the barracks. The three last lingerers over the port dispersed, about ten or twelve minutes after Campbell had left the mess-room. Boyd came down alone, and was surprised to find the major waiting for him near the head of the staircase. Campbell had spent these twelve minutes not, as one might have expected, in verifying the disputed point in the Drill Book, but in stamping round the barrack square: "he was extremely irritated, and if he had chanced to meet any friend he would probably have sent him with a message of no amicable nature (i.e. a challenge) to Captain Boyd". But cooling a little, as he says, and reflecting that senior officers and married men should not set an example of violence to subalterns, he resolved to wait for the captain, and to tell him "in an amicable fashion" that he was convinced that the words used were not deliberately intended

to hurt his feelings, and that all would be forgotten if Boyd would say so much before the two young men who had been present.

This may have been a well-intended idea, but it was certainly ill-judged. Both parties had drunk too much, and nothing was to be gained by a second interview, while the wine was still working. Boyd, on hearing that Campbell required an apology before the two juniors, answered, "with a fierce and haughty eagerness", that he would do no such thing, and that the major might proceed as he thought proper. At this Campbell, surprised (as he says) and irritated, told him that his conduct was absurd and unreasonable, with some warmth and in a rather loud tone of voice. Boyd replied: "I am not to be bullied, sir —you need not speak so loud—unless indeed you want to be overheard". This Campbell took as an insinuation that he was accused of making a noise in order to attract the attention of other officers, who would probably intervene and take them apart. The words, however, bear equally well, and more naturally, the interpretation that Boyd wished to avoid public brawling. But Campbell, as he acknowledged, was so fired by what he took to be Boyd's meaning that he clapped his hand to his sword, "as he believes with the intention of drawing instantly", not observing in the dusk that the captain had no weapon with him. At the best this was an invitation to a scuffle with swords in the dark, a proceeding contrary to every rule of the contemporary code.

Boyd, however flushed he may have been, had full control of a very biting tongue: he remarked in a sneering tone: "Do you wish to assassinate me, sir? Only cowards draw on an unarmed man." At which Campbell, "stung to the soul", as he says, bowed, took off his hat with a wide salute, observed that such an idea could never have come into the mind of a gentleman, and that he would leave the choice of weapons to Captain Boyd. The latter, in his sarcastic tone, replied: "I don't care a damn what the weapons are—slugs in a saw-pit, in a minute, if you choose it."

The major, quite beside himself, and choosing to take Boyd's words as a challenge to a duel on the spot, observed that ten minutes would suit him, and bade the captain name the place. Boyd made no answer, and walked downstairs to the barrack yard, without further words, though Campbell shouted twice across the stairs to him to bid him name a place. Apparently the captain expected a formal challenge by way of seconds to follow.

Now comes the episode which, as we are told, caused the Jury at the ensuing trial to give the verdict of simple murder against Campbell. He ran home to his lodgings at once, to fetch his case of pistols. They were under a table in a corner of his dining-room, and when he entered to pick them up, he found his wife and his three elder children at tea. Not wishing to let Mrs. Campbell see his purpose, he accepted a cup of tea from her, and entered into conversation with his family. The lady saw that he was looking worried, and insisted on knowing what was the matter. He made some evasive answers, and finally owned that there had been an altercation at mess, the subalterns had been quarrelling, "boys would be boys". He had drunk one cup of tea when his baby, most unluckily, started screaming in a neighbouring room. Mrs. Campbell ran off to soothe it, and the moment her back was turned the major swept up the pistol-case and went off with it very quietly. He had been not more than eight or ten minutes at home. The Jury, at his trial, as we are told, were strongly of opinion that this gap in the evening's proceedings took away all chance of pleading sudden and unpremeditated quarrel. There had been a complete break in Campbell's action: during the walk home and the small-talk with his wife. He had been given time to settle down, and anything that he now did must be considered deliberate. This was the same notion that sent Lord Ferrers to the gallows half a century before: in that case, too, there had been an interval between the quarrel and the fatal act. After a stormy scene with an agent accused of dishonesty, Ferrers had ridden away, and then had returned after some time

and shot the unfortunate man. The Court held that no heat of altercation could be pleaded, and that there had been considered intent to murder. And similarly in this case "the cup of tea hanged the major".

On reaching the barracks Campbell went to the room of Lieutenant Hall, the subaltern who had seen the quarrel commence, and told him that a duel was impending, and that he hoped that Hall would serve as his second, if Captain Boyd would allow seconds to be present; but he doubted it, for Boyd was "a most terrible man and in a furious humour". The lieutenant said that he would be happy to officiate. This was all proper and reasonable according to the ideas of the day, and Hall should have been sent to find Boyd and ask him to name a friend. At the trial he asserted that he was confident that he and Boyd's second would have settled the matter amicably.

Instead of this Campbell went himself to the mess, and asked one of the waiters to tell the captain that a gentleman wished to see him. Boyd was walking in the barrack square with another officer and a lady. On being called by the waiter he came up in a few minutes, and was much surprised to find who the gentleman was! They turned into a small side-room. Campbell began by observing that he had come without sending in his name, because he wanted to give no pretext for the insinuation that he wished to give other persons an opportunity for interfering. The remark made half an hour back, about his loud talk being likely to attract witnesses, was rankling in his mind. Boyd left this observation unnoticed, but said that he had not been expecting to be called upon till next morning, and that he had no pistols ready. He was undoubtedly in the right, according to the code of the day. Then Campbell took the irrevocable step which made the tragedy inevitable. He replied with the taunt that, when they had parted half an hour back, Boyd had said that he would fight at a minute's notice. He had been kept waiting too long—and here was a case of pistols from which he might make his choice. The captain was as furious at this deliberate

insinuation that he had asked for an instant duel and was backing out of it, as the major had been at the idea that his shouting had been conceived as a device for calling in friends who would stop the affair. He asked Campbell whether he was wishing to conduct the meeting without seconds. The major replied with another taunt: "That is exactly as you please, Captain Boyd: I was never in a situation where I could not get a friend, and you, too, can readily find a friend, no doubt, *if you wish for it.*" Now seconds, as both knew, would almost certainly have stopped the whole matter, and the "if you wish for it" was a hint that Boyd might be ready to shirk a fight. Thus driven into a corner, the unfortunate captain said that it was all one to him whether they had seconds or no, and that he was ready whenever Campbell pleased. The answer was "here and now"—they went into opposite corners of the small room. Campbell asked who should give the signal to fire. "I don't care a damn who gives it; you may give it if you please", said Boyd. "Ready!" and "Fire!" followed immediately. Boyd's ball struck the wall not far from Campbell's head: Campbell's ball took Boyd in the chest.

The report of the pistols brought officers and mess-waiters in from the next room: they saw Campbell lifting Boyd, who was bleeding badly, into a chair. On the appearance of the crowd Campbell said, "On the word of a dying man, was not everything fair?" The reply was given differently by different witnesses at the subsequent trial. According to one version it was "Campbell, you are a bad man; you know that I wanted to wait, and to have friends"; according to the other, "Campbell, you are a bad man, you hurried me". Upon this the major burst out with "Good God, sir! you will not say before these gentlemen that everything was fair: did you not say that you were ready?" "Yes," said Boyd, "but you are a bad man." After a pause he gave Campbell his hand and said, "Campbell, I feel for you, and I am sure that you feel for me", and then "Poor man, I am sorry for him". He became unconscious, and died within eighteen hours.

So ended this detestable affair—a trivial dispute led to the use of words which two excited and captious officers twisted into taunts that raised the point of personal honour. Public opinion was decidedly against Campbell; it was he, men said, who had made a serious business out of a silly mess-table wrangle, who had insisted on an irregular duel without seconds, who had waylaid Boyd and taunted him into fighting at a moment's notice. Realizing the situation at once, he disappeared, and was not heard of for many months. Hence the long delay in his trial, which did not take place till August 1808, thirteen months after the duel. He was unlucky enough to be recognized and arrested in Scotland, from whence he was sent back to Armagh. Of what had happened between the first dispute over the wine, and Campbell's reappearance with his pistols at the barracks, there was no one who could speak, since no one had been present either at the altercation on the stairs or at the actual duel. The major's own lips were sealed by the criminal procedure of those days. The Grand Jury sent him to trial, the petty Jury found him guilty, but added a recommendation to mercy. This was refused by the personal decision of the King, as we are told: George III hated duelling, and regarded this as a typically bad case, one which allowed a long-needed example to be made at last, for the benefit of all officers inclined to waste the lives, which they owed to their country, in drunken brawls.

The sentence of the law was carried out—to the general surprise; duellists were not hanged in those days—even the notorious Major Oneby had escaped his sentence by suicide. Campbell showed every sign of contrition, owned the folly and wickedness of duelling, and made a most edifying and religious end, after receiving the Sacrament. Yet he never seems to have realized that his offence had been against anything but the terms of the law and the dictates of Christianity. In his dying confession he describes himself as "one more unfortunate than wicked—hurried on to this much-to-be-lamented catastrophe by insults past endurance". The mentality of 1807 is sometimes difficult to understand!

V

COLUMN AND LINE IN THE PENINSULA

EVERY student who takes a serious interest in military history is aware that, in a general way, the victories of Wellington over his French adversaries were due to a skilful use of the two-deep British line against the massive column, which had become the regular formation for a French army acting on the offensive, during the later years of the great war that raged from 1792 till 1814. But I am not sure that the methods and limitations of Wellington's system are fully appreciated. For it is not sufficient to lay down the general thesis that he found himself opposed by troops who invariably worked in columns, and that he beat those troops by the simple expedient of meeting them, front to front, with other troops who as invariably fought in the two-deep battle-line. The statement is true in a rough way, but needs explanation and modification.

The use of infantry in line was no invention of Wellington's, nor is it a universal panacea for all the crises of war. Troops who are armed with missile weapons, and who hope to prevail in combat by the rapidity and accuracy of their shooting, must necessarily array themselves in an order of battle which permits as many men as possible to use their arms freely. This was as clear to Edward III at Crecy, or to Henry V at Agincourt, as to Wellington at Bussaco and Salamanca. A shooting-line must be made as thin as is consistent with solidity, since every soldier who is placed so far to the rear that he cannot see the object at which he is aiming represents a lost weapon, whether he be armed with bow, or with musket, or with rifle.

Unaimed fire was even more fruitless in the days of short ranges than it is in the XXth century. And the general principles which guided an English general who wished to win by his archery in the Hundred Years War were much the same as those which prevail to-day. There was, it is true, an intermediate period in the XVIIth century when line-fighting for infantry armed with missile weapons seemed to have gone out of fashion. This gap in the continuity of British tactics was due to the introduction of fire-arms, which during the first two centuries of their existence were both slow to load and very short in their range. The earliest musket had an effective range decidedly less than that of the old English bow, and took five times as long between shot and shot. Indeed, it is not easy to make out the reasons why it superseded the bow in the end of the reign of Elizabeth, till one has gone through the series of controversial pamphlets which were written by the advocates of the rival weapons between 1590 and 1600. But after the disappearance of the archer from the British line of battle, there was a century during which generals trusted to the pike and the dense column as the main striking force in infantry fighting, while the musket became for a time the subsidiary arm. This came to an end with the invention of the bayonet in the later XVIIth century, which enabled every musketeer to become his own pikeman, and abolished the necessity for the further continuance of the thick clump of pikes as a shelter and support for the slowly-loading bearers of the fire-arm. The Boyne and Killiecrankie were the last British battles in which the pike appeared, and Marlborough's victories were won by regiments armed with musket and bayonet in the style which was to endure without change for the next hundred and fifty years. For no essential difference was introduced with the weapon of the infantry soldier till the middle of the XIXth century, when the rifle, which had been employed hitherto only by small and chosen bodies of light infantry, was put into the hands of whole armies. We had possessed riflemen in the British Army as

early as the War of American Independence, and specialized rifle battalions since 1800, yet so late as the Crimean War certain divisions sailed to the East armed with nothing better than the old "Brown Bess".

During the wars of the XVIIIth century, from Marlborough to Frederick the Great, all European infantry was fighting normally in line, three or four deep, and looking for success in battle to the rapidity and accuracy of its fire, not to the impetus of advances in column, such as had been practised by the pikemen of the XVIIth century, and were to be introduced again by the French generals of the Revolutionary Period. Armies had a stereotyped array, with infantry battalions deployed in long lines in the centre, and heavy masses of cavalry covering the wings. A glance at the battle-plans of the War of the Austrian Succession or the Seven Years War shows a marvellous similarity between them all in the general arrangements, and the front-to-front collision of long parallel lines was normal, though commanders of genius had their own way of varying the tactics of the day. Frederick the Great's famous oblique order, or advance in echelon, with the strong striking wing brought forward, and the weaker containing wing held back and refused, is sufficiently well known. Occasionally he was able to vary it, as at Rossbach and Leuthen, and to throw a great part of his troops across the enemy's flank at right-angles, so as to roll him up in detail. But these were "uncovenanted mercies" obtained owing to the abnormal sloth or unskilfulness of the opposing general. They partook in no degree of the nature of an attack in column for the purpose of drilling a hole in the front of the enemy's line of battle. There are, of course, instances in the old XVIIIth-century wars of engagements won by the piercing of a hostile centre, such as Marshal Saxe's victory of Roucoux (1746). But in such cases the advantage was won by pushing forward successive lines of infantry one after another, each carrying the last forward, against some section of the hostile front where the opposing force was much less in number. The attacking force was deployed in brigade lines.

one behind the other, and the units were not in column. At Fontenoy it is often said that the Duke of Cumberland assaulted the French left-centre in column, but this is quite inaccurate as regards his original array. His English and Hanoverian infantry went forward in three successive lines, and his formation only assumed something like a columnar shape when he had broken through the French first line for a certain space, and had then been forced to throw back both his wings in order to avoid being taken in flank by fresh troops from the intact parts of Saxe's front and from his general reserve. To speak of the "invincible column of Fontenoy" is to use a most misleading term.

Normally the tactics of the XVIIIth century were directed to the smashing up of one of the enemy's wings, either by outflanking it, or by assailing it with very superior forces, while the rest of the hostile army was "contained" by equal or inferior numbers, according as the assailant had more or less troops than his enemy. The smashing blow was more often than not delivered by a superior mass of cavalry concentrated on the striking wing, which commenced the action by turning or beating down the inferior hostile cavalry, after which the infantry of the turned wing would be helpless against attacks on its flank or rear by the victorious horse of the assailant. Such a type of battle may sometimes be found much later, even in Napoleonic times: Ocaña is a perfect example of it. There the reinforced cavalry wing of the French army tumbled the Spanish right-flank cavalry into ruin, and then fell on the exposed rear of the long line of infantry, which the beaten cavalry ought to have protected.

Speaking roughly, however, the period of set battles in line terminated with the outbreak of the French Revolutionary war. The generals who conducted the first campaigns of that struggle on the side of the allies had been trained in the school of Frederick the Great, or of his rivals, Daun and Laudohn, and conscientiously attempted to reproduce the old style of engagements. And at first the elder generals in command of the French armies obliged them with the

sort of opposition that they wanted. But the troops of the Jacobin republic had been demoralized by the removal or desertion of the greater proportion of their commissioned officers, and their *cadres* had been hastily filled with half-trained recruits, while hundreds of new units formed on no old *cadre* at all, in which men and officers alike were little better than untrained civilians, took the field along with the reorganized remains of the old royal army. I need hardly remind you of the series of disgraceful defeats which these raw and improvised hosts suffered, at the hands of much inferior numbers of Austrian and other allied troops in 1792–3. They were completely beaten, both in tactics, in manœuvring, and in fire-discipline, by the well trained old battalions to whom they were opposed. Demoralized by many disasters, they were continually raising the cry of treason against their generals, and their complaints were taken most seriously by the Paris government, which arrested and guillotined one after another a large proportion of the unfortunate commanders-in-chief to whom the first armies of the republic had been entrusted. The principle at the back of the mind of the Jacobin Committee of Public Safety seems to have been that generals fighting with the axe above their heads would at least be resolute and enterprising. If defeat meant impeachment and death they would be stimulated to desperate efforts to avoid it, and the famous "representatives *en mission*" were sent to the headquarters of every army to apply their personal stimulus to the unfortunate officers. As these detestable emissaries were, almost without exception, as ignorant of military affairs as they were self-important and autocratic, the results of their first efforts were simply to confuse and to drive to the verge of insanity the generals on whom they were inflicted.

One thing, however, the Jacobin government did accomplish. They pushed into the field reinforcements in such myriads that the armies of the allies were hopelessly outnumbered on every frontier. The first successes of the French armies in the north were won by brute force, by heaping

double and triple numbers on to the enemy. And the new tactics of the Revolutionary army were evolved from a consciousness of superiority in this respect, a determination to swamp troops that manœuvred better than themselves by hurling preponderant masses upon them, regardless of the loss that must necessarily be suffered. For they had inexhaustible reserves from the levy *en masse* behind them, while the bases of the allies were far off, and their trained men, when destroyed, could only be replaced slowly and with difficulty.

When the generals of the Revolution threw away the old linear tactics learned in the school of Frederick the Great, as inapplicable to troops that could not manœuvre with the same speed and accuracy as their enemies, the improvised system that succeeded was a simple and a wasteful one, but had the merit of permitting them to use their superiority of numbers. It consisted in throwing at the hostile front a very thick skirmishing line, which sheltered and concealed a row of columns of the heaviest sort. The idea was that the first line of *tirailleurs* would so engage the enemy and keep him occupied, that the supporting columns would get up to striking distance with practically no loss, and could be hurled, while still intact, upon the hostile first line, which they would pierce by their mere impetus and weight, since they were only exposed to fire for a very few minutes, and could endure the loss suffered in that short time without losing their *élan* or their pace. The essential part of this system was the enormously thick and powerful skirmishing line. Whole battalions were dispersed in chains of *tirailleurs*, who frankly abandoned any attempt at ordered movement, took refuge behind cover of all sorts, but were so numerous that they could always drive in the very thin skirmishing line of the enemy, and get closely engaged with his whole front. The orderly battalion fire of the Austrian or other allied troops opposed to them did comparatively little harm to these swarms, who were taking cover as much as possible and presented no closed body or solid mark for the volleys poured at them. There is a very clear

description of such a fight in Ditfurth's narrative of the Battle of Hondeschoote, where Walmoden's Hanoverians, covering the Duke of York's flank, fought for four hours against a swarm of *tirailleurs*, who always gave way and took refuge in hedges or buildings when attacked by the bayonet, but always came back to molest the defensive line opposed to them, till after clearing their front eleven times the Hanoverians had to give way in the end, because their original three-deep line had simply been shot to pieces, and about a third of their men had fallen. It looks as if the proper remedy against such a swarm-attack would have been local and partial cavalry charges, made by isolated squadrons in support of the attacked infantry line. For nothing could have been more vulnerable by a sudden cavalry charge than a disorderly chain of light troops. On many occasions in the campaigns of 1793–4 the French infantry had shown itself very helpless against horsemen, when it had been caught in circumstances where it could not form square. But this particular remedy against the swarm-attack does not seem to have been tried on the crucial occasions, and many parts of Flanders are so cut up with small enclosures that the use of cavalry as a general remedy might have often proved difficult. The masses which supported the *tirailleurs* were formed either in columns of companies or columns of divisions. In the former case the eight companies, three deep, stood one behind the other, with a total depth of twenty-four men. In the latter the front of the battalion was formed by a "division", i.e. two companies, so that the depth was only twelve. In either case none but the two front men of the line of the leading company, or division, could use their fire-arms, and the rest were useless save for the impetus which they gave to the rolling mass. But such a column, when properly sheathed by the skirmishing line till the last moment, generally came with a very effective rush against the heavily engaged and often already depleted line of allied troops opposed to it. It is equally clear that *without* its screen of *tirailleurs* it would have been a very clumsy

and expensive instrument of war, since it combined the minimum of shooting power with the maximum of vulnerability. But fortunately for the generals of the French Republic they had to fight against elderly officers of the XVIIIth-century school, who clung to the idea of covering every point, and habitually extended their armies over fronts of such an exaggerated length that the line was generally very thin. An enemy who attacked with heavy masses at a decisive spot, while leaving the rest of the hostile line "contained" by an adequate force, had a fair chance of penetrating, though the process of penetration might be costly to the troops forming the head of the column.

The best early summary of this change of tactics which I have seen occurs in an anonymous English pamphlet published in 1802, which puts the matter in a nutshell. "The French Army was composed of troops of the line without order, and of raw and inexperienced volunteers. They experienced defeats in the beginning, but war in the meantime was forming both officers and soldiers. In an open country they took to forming their armies in columns instead of lines, which they could not preserve without difficulty. They reduced battles to attacks on certain points, where brigade succeeded brigade, and fresh troops supplied the place of those who were driven back, till they were enabled to force the post, and make the enemy give way. They were fully aware that they could not give battle in regular order, and sought to reduce engagements to important affairs of posts. This plan has succeeded. They look upon losses as nothing, provided they succeed in the end; they set little value on their men, because they have the certainty of being able to replace them, and the customary superiority of their numbers affords them an advantage which can only be counterbalanced by great skill, conduct, and activity."[1]

After 1794, when the Republican armies had won their

[1] From the anonymous *Character of the Armies of the Various European Powers in 1802.*

first series of great successes, and had driven their enemies behind their own frontiers, there is a distinct change in the tactical conceptions of the French armies. The troops had improved immensely in morale and self-confidence. A new race of generals had appeared, who were neither obsessed by reminiscences of the system of Frederick, like some of their predecessors, nor spurred to blind violence by the fear of the impending axe, as others had been. This race of capable self-made men soon learnt how to modify the brutal and unscientific methods of the Jacobin armies of 1793–4, which had won victory indeed, but only by the force of numbers, and at heavy cost. There remained as a permanent lesson from the earlier campaigns two principles —the "avoidance of dispersion, by which armies cover everything and protect nothing", the necessity of striking at crucial points rather than delivering "linear" battles engaged with equal intensity along the whole front. In general their tactics became very supple, their units manœuvred with a freedom which had been unknown to the earlier generation. The divisional organization, now always employed, gave to the whole army a power of independent movement unknown in days when a line of battle was considered as a rigid thing, formed of brigades elbow-to-elbow, none of which ought to move without the direct orders of the general-in-chief. We find the French operating, as the years wore on, often with inferior numbers and not with the brute-force of heavy numerical superiority. They won by intelligent strategy rather than by headlong impetus, by brilliant manœuvring rather than by mere bludgeon work. Yet, oddly enough, there was no formal revision of official tactics: the "Règlement d'Infanterie" which had been drawn up as early as 1791 was never recast, though many generals criticized it. It survived the whole of the wars of the Empire, and was not finally abolished till early in the reign of Louis Philippe. This is all the more strange because that compilation was singularly deficient in the section dealing with skirmishing and the use of light troops. It had the three-deep Frederician line,

and the column of companies or divisions as its base, and knew nothing of the attack by dense swarms of *tirailleurs* which had been the salvation of France in 1793–4.

It is remarkable that Napoleon, during all his years of domination as Consul and Emperor, never issued a new general drill-book, but made the old one suffice. But, as we shall have occasion to state in another place, he was essentially a strategist rather than a tactician. When he had placed the requisite number of troops in the requisite position, he left the details of the actual stroke to his subordinates, without troubling too much as to whether a battalion advanced in column of companies or in column of divisions, or whether an army corps drew up its units in two or in three lines. It is not too much to say that from the mere point of view of tactics some of Napoleon's battles were very badly fought—Marengo and Waterloo, his most brilliant victory and his last crushing defeat, illustrate this point clearly enough. Formation and movements were sometimes made under his eye which would have made Frederick the Great foam with rage. But his strategical insight was almost infallible, and usually the troops, being in the right strategical position, discharged their duty, even though tactical blunders sometimes made their success very costly. If the Emperor had any favourite infantry formation it was the *ordre mixte* recommended by Guibert, far back before his own day,[1] in which a certain combination of the advantages of line and column was obtained, by drawing up the brigade or regiment with alternate battalions in line three deep and in column, with a column always at each outer end, so as to give security against sudden flank attacks by cavalry. This gave a fair amount of frontal fire from the deployed battalions, combined with solidity secured by the columns interspersed among them. If, for example, a regiment of three battalions of 900 men each was drawn up in the *ordre mixte*, with

[1] See Colin's *Éducation Militaire de Napoléon*, lxxv, etc. He seems to have used this formation first at the passage of the Tagliamento in 1797.

one deployed battalion flanked by two battalions in column, it had about 720 men in the firing-line, while if arrayed in three columns it would only have had about 180 able to use their muskets freely. Still, at the best, this formation was very heavy, when we reflect on all the serried back-ranks of the flanking battalions, with no power to join in the fusillade; for pure fire-effect it was as inferior to the line as it was superior to the mere column. Nor was it always employed by the imperial armies. At the striking-point of a battlefield, where the Emperor designed to deliver his decisive blow, he often used the pure columnar formation, covering the front of the mass which was to make the thrust by a skirmishing line, and, if possible, supporting it by a heavy artillery fire from the flank.

He was aware of the weak point of the column, its inadequate fire-force: "Même en plaine", he observed in his celebrated interview with Foy, which the latter preserved with such photographic accuracy, "les colonnes n'enfoncent les lignes qu'autant qu'elles sont appuyées par le feu d'une artillerie très supérieure, qui prépare l'attaque."[1] And his attacks with columns were habitually preceded by a crushing artillery fire at the point which he was about to assail, a fire which he himself, as an old artillery officer, knew how to direct with the greatest accuracy and efficiency. It seems that he relied much more on such preparation by concentrated batteries for the shielding of his columns than on the sheathing of them by a thick skirmishing line, the old device of the generals of the Republic. An enemy's firing-line might be occupied and demoralized by a heavy artillery attack, while the attacking force was drawing near, as well as by a screen of skirmishers. There seem to have been cases, even in his earlier battles, where the light-infantry screen, in front of the column that was to make the stroke, was practically non-existent. His generals in the Peninsular War seem habitually to have used for the skirmishing line no more than the *voltigeur* company of each battalion, no more than one-tenth of the whole

[1] Foy's *Memoirs*, ed. Girod de l'Ain, p. 107.

unit when the battalion was at its original strength of ten companies, though somewhat greater in proportion after the number of companies was cut down from ten to six after 1808. I do not remember any case in the Peninsular battles where whole battalions were broken up into skirmishers, and thrown forward ahead of the striking mass, as had been common in 1793 or 1794. Nor do I think that it occurred often, if ever, in any of the Imperial battles.

In fact, it appears that Napoleon preferred the *ordre mixte*, the alternation of battalions in line and battalions in columns, in those parts of the field where he was wishing to contain" the enemy and to hold him in check, while pure columns, whose way was prepared rather by artillery fire than by a thick skirmishing line, were used at the decisive points where the penetration of the hostile line was intended to take place. If I remember aright Davoust's "refused" wing at Austerlitz, Masséna's "refused" wing at Wagram, fought in the *ordre mixte*, as did Lobau and the 6th Corps at Waterloo. In all these cases the corps named were intended to occupy the enemy in front of them, and to fight a defensive or "containing" battle, while the decision was made by a great attack in column on another section of the field. But apparently Lannes at Jena and Victor at Friedland, who were real "striking units", also used this formation in attack. Indeed the Emperor recommends it as a general device in a dispatch addressed to Soult before Austerlitz, to be used "autant que faire se pourra".[1] It is interesting to note that less than a week after, that marshal, having to strike the main blow in the great battle, did not use the plan at all, but fought throughout his attack with his battalions in columns of divisions, for he particularly mentions this in his report to the Emperor.[2] Whatever may have been the Emperor's theoretical preference for the *ordre mixte*, his most celebrated battle-strokes seem generally to have been made by

[1] Napoleon to Soult, November 26, 1805, Correspondence 9527.
[2] See Dumoulin's *Précis d'Histoire Militaire*, x, 263, and Colin, *Tactique et Discipline*, lxxxv.

very gross and heavy masses. The worst instances, Macdonald's column at Wagram and D'Erlon's first disposition at Waterloo, both perfectly monstrous formations in the way of depth, were not ordered or authorized by the Emperor, but it is clear that in many other cases the advance in solid undeployed masses was permitted or approved by him. The *ordre mixte* was only a "counsel of perfection". At its best it was still a very heavy formation.

Having described, perhaps in too much detail, the tactical development of the French system from 1792 to 1808, it remains to inquire what English observers had made of it. The first reflections on the new type of war upon this side of the Channel seem to have been mainly inspired by the experiences of the Duke of York's army in 1793–4, when the thick chains of *tirailleurs* which formed the front line of the French array did so much damage to troops which fought them in the old three-deep line, without any adequate counter-provision of skirmishers. We find ere long complaints that the British force had no sufficient proportion of light troops, that the one light company per battalion was wholly insufficient to keep off a French attack from pressing close up to the main line, and doing damage to it before the real struggle had begun. Two remedies were proposed. The first was that the proportion of light companies to a battalion should be increased from one to two,[1] or that in each company of the regiment a certain proportion of men should be selected for good marksmanship and taught light infantry duty, while remaining attached to their companies. Of these two propositions the first was never tried, but the second was actually practised by certain colonels, who trained fifteen or twenty men per company as skirmishers: these were called "flankers". The only British battle where I find them specially mentioned, however, is Maida, and their mention

[1] Sir James Sinclair in his *Observations on the Military System of Great Britain so far as Respects the Formation of Infantry* deals with this at length, and proposes to have 160 light infantry to each battalion of 640 men.

here points out the danger of the system. Generals wanting more light troops habitually purloined the light companies of battalions to make separate "light battalions". But not only did they do this, but sometimes they even stole the "flankers" also from the centre companies. In Stuart's force that fought at Maida were present not only the light companies but also the "flankers" of regiments left behind in Sicily, which had therefore been deprived of every single marksman that they possessed—an execrable device. The system was only tentative, however, and soon disappeared.

But there was a second alternative course open to the British: instead of developing more skirmishers in each battalion, they might create new light infantry corps, or turn whole units of the line into light troops. Both of these devices were tried. There were old precedents for the first in the War of the American Rebellion, where the British generals had, of necessity, embodied corps of riflemen to oppose to the deadly marksmen from the backwoods who formed the most efficient part of an American army. But all these Rangers, etc., had been disbanded after 1783, and the system had to begin *de novo*. It does not seem to have been set going till very late; it was not till 1798 that the first British Rifle battalion was created, to wit, the fifth battalion of the 60th or Royal Americans, which was formed as a Jäger corps out of the remnants of many defunct foreign light corps in the British pay, and remained largely German in composition for many years after. This was the first green-coated battalion; the second was Coote Manningham's Experimental Rifle Corps, formed in January 1800 and finally taken into the service, after some vicissitudes, as the 95th, a name famous in Peninsular annals, though now almost forgotten under the newer title of the "Rifle Brigade". The regiment was enlarged to three battalions before it came under Wellington's hands. Later on, though the number of rifle corps was not increased, yet an addition was made to the light troops of the British Army by turning certain picked battalions into light infantry.

They were armed with a special musket of light weight, not a rifle, and all the companies equally were instructed in skirmishing work. There were also some changes made in the uniform; the officers in some corps were given pelisses similar to those worn by hussars—surely a very uncomfortable and encumbering garment for men who were supposed to be specially intended for wood and hedgerow fighting! The first unit transformed was the 90th, or Perthshire Volunteers, which received the title of a light infantry regiment in 1794. The precedent, however, was not acted upon again till the 43rd and 52nd, the famous regiments of the Peninsular Light Division, were made light infantry in 1803. The last additions during the period of the Napoleonic Wars were the 68th and 85th in 1808, and the 51st and 71st in 1809. Most of these corps had two battalions, but, even so, the provision of light infantry was very small for an army which at that time had nearly 200 battalions embodied. There were also some foreign corps, however, to be taken into consideration, which stood on the British muster-roll, viz. the two light battalions of the King's German Legion, the Brunswick Oels Jägers, and the Chasseurs Britanniques. But all these were created after 1805.

But at least, during the second period of the Great French War, our armies were not practically destitute of light troops, as they had been in 1793–4, and we shall see that this had no small importance in Wellington's tactical devices. The other lesson that might conceivably have been deduced from the campaigns of those years was the efficacy of columns for striking at the critical points of an enemy's line. The Continental enemies of the French were affected by what they had seen of this sort of success, and often copied the formation of their adversaries. But it is notable that the old and wholesome prejudice of the British in favour of the line was not perceptibly disturbed by what had happened of late. The idea that the column was clumsy and expensive was not in the least shaken, and the theory that infantry ought to win by the rapidity

and accuracy of its shooting, and that every musket not in the firing-line was wasted, continued to prevail. The reply of the British to the French *ordre mixte* was to reduce the depth of the deployed battalion from three ranks to two, because it had been discovered that the fire of the third rank was difficult, dangerous to those in front, and practically ineffective. I cannot discover what was the first important engagement in which the two-deep line was employed, but it was certainly in common use before the Egyptian campaign of 1801, and an ordinance of that year made it the normal formation for British Infantry, "even for reviews".[1] Hitherto the three-rank Prussian order, stereotyped in David Dundas's drill-book of 1788, had been the official array of the battalion. British military opinion, therefore, had decided that the lesson of the late campaigns was that fire was everything, and that the correct answer to the columnal attack was to put more men into the firing-line.

It cannot be said that the efficiency of the two-deep line against the column was publicly demonstrated by a crucial experiment of the most conclusive sort till three years after the commencement of the second half of the Great French War. But for all those who were present, or who received the report of an intelligent eye-witness, the little-remembered Calabrian Battle of Maida was an epoch-making day in British military history. On the sandy plain by the Lamato, 5,000 infantry in line received the shock of 6,000 in column, and inflicted on them one of the most crushing defeats on a small scale that took place during the whole war, disabling or taking 2,000 men, with a total loss to themselves of only 320.[2] The troops and the order of battle won the victory, for the commander, Stuart, was an incapable officer whose personality had no influence on the fight, and who sacrificed all the fruits of his success

[1] See Fortescue, iv, 921.

[2] For a detailed account of the Battle of Maida and its tactical meaning, the reader is referred to the third essay in this little volume, pp. 37–69.

by his torpidity. But the moral was unmistakable—on the critical point of the field four battalions[1] of the best troops of the old French army of Italy, in column of divisions, had been met in frontal shock and blown to pieces by three British battalions in two-deep line. The event had never been for a moment doubtful; the losses of the vanquished had been fearful, those of the victors trifling.[2] And, as I have observed elsewhere, some of the officers who were afterwards to be Wellington's most trusted lieutenants were present at Maida and understood its meaning, among them Cole, who later commanded the Peninsular 4th division, the brigadiers Kempt and Oswald, and Colborne, the famous colonel of the 52nd Light Infantry.

Sir Arthur Wellesley himself was, of course, far away from Calabria in July 1806; he had returned from India, after an absence of nine years from England, only in the preceding autumn. But the tale of Maida only confirmed him in conclusions that he had drawn long before. Before he left Calcutta he is said to have remarked to his confidants that "the French were sweeping everything before them in Europe by the use of the formation in column, but that he was fully convinced that the column could and would be beaten by the line". It was two years before he himself got the chance of making the great experiment, but he sailed for Portugal in the summer of 1808 with the idea in his head. A conversation which he held with Croker just before his departure chances to have been preserved in the latter's diary, under the date June 14, 1808. After a long reverie he was asked the subject of his thoughts. "To say the truth", he replied, "I am thinking of the French I am going to fight. I have not seen them since the campaign in Flanders (1794–5), when they were capital soldiers, and a dozen years of victory under Bonaparte must have made

[1] Two thousand eight hundred men of the 1st Léger and 42nd Ligne opposed to 2,100 of Kempt's light battalion and Acland's 78th and 81st.

[2] The four French battalions lost 1,080 men, the three British only 320.

them better still. 'Tis enough to make one thoughtful. But though they may overwhelm me, I don't think they will out-manœuvre me. First, because I am not afraid of them, as everyone else seems to be; and secondly, because, if all I hear about their system is true, I think it a false one against steady troops. I suspect all the Continental armies are half-beaten before the battle begins. I at least will not be frightened beforehand."

Wellesley went out to Portugal to see what could be done with perfectly steady troops, as he said, against the "new French system". But it would be to convey a false impression of his meaning if we merely stated that he went out simply to beat the column with the line, though the essential fact is sufficiently true. He went out to try his own conception of the proper way to use the line formation, which had its peculiarities and its limitations. The chief of these were (1) that the line must not be exposed before the moment of actual conflict; (2) that till that moment it must be covered by a screen of skirmishers impenetrable to the enemy's *tirailleurs*; (3) that it must be properly covered on its flanks, either by the nature of the ground or by cavalry and artillery. When we investigate all his earlier pitched battles, we shall see that each of these three requisites was carefully secured.

(1) It was necessary for success that the line should be kept concealed from the enemy's distant fire, of infantry or of artillery, as long as was possible. Hence we find that one of the most marked characteristics of Wellesley's battles was that he took up, whenever it was feasible, a position in which he could mask his main line, and show nothing to the adversary but his skirmishers and possibly his artillery, for the latter, having to operate before the infantry fighting began, and having to take up commanding positions, were very generally visible from the first. At Vimeiro he so concealed his army that Junot, thinking to turn his flank, merely ran into his left wing with the turning column. At Bussaco, Masséna, no mean general, mistook his right centre for his extreme right, and was out-

flanked the moment that his attack was well pronounced. At Salamanca it was much the same; Pakenham's division and its attendant cavalry, concealed in a wood, were far outside the French marching column that vainly thought that it had got round the British right wing. At Waterloo the main line of infantry was practically invisible to the enemy, till they had climbed the slope above which it stood. Wellington's ideal position was a *glacis* of rising ground with a plateau or a dip above it. The infantry were drawn back from the skyline, and placed just behind the crest, if the hill was saddle-backed, or some hundreds of yards from the edge if it was a flat-topped plateau. There they stood or lay till they were wanted, screened from all artillery fire, and advanced to their fighting ground only when the fire-combat of infantry was to begin. Everyone will remember Wellington's caustic comment on the Prussian order of battle at Ligny, where Blücher had drawn out his army all along the declivity of a descending slope: "Damnably mauled these fellows will be—every man visible to the enemy!"[1] By the end of the Peninsular War it had become so well known to the enemy that Wellington's army would be under cover, that he was able to play off on them the trick of offering battle in a half-manned position, because he knew that they would take it for granted that the ground invisible to them held ample forces. The mere fact that Wellington appeared ready to fight convinced Soult on the first day of Sorauren that the whole British army was up, whereas the British general was merely "bluffing", making an appearance of calm readiness to fight, when he would have had to retreat if only he had been seriously attacked. Two years later the same conviction that Wellington's forces

[1] See Stanhope's *Conversations with Wellington*, p. 109, for this verdict, at great length. But in more solemn phrase Wellington says: "I told the Prussian officers, in the presence of Colonel Hardinge, that according to my judgement thee xposure of the advanced columns, and indeed of the army, to cannonade, standing as they did displayed to the aim of the enemy's fire, was not prudent." *De Ros Manuscript*, quoted in Maxwell's *Life of Wellington*, ii, p. 20.

might be hidden behind any crest or slope kept Reille halted for certain fatal hours in front of Quatre-Bras, where there was nothing really opposed to him beyond one Dutch-Belgian division. "Ce pourrait bien être une bataille d'Espagne, les troupes anglaises se montreraient quand il en serait temps",[1] were the words of this corps-commander, who had so many old Peninsular lessons on his brain.

It was only when absolute necessity compelled, owing to no cover being available in some parts of the line, that Wellington occasionally left troops in his battle-front visible to the enemy, and exposed to distant artillery fire. The best-known instance of this was the case of his centre brigades at Talavera, which were unmasked perforce, because between the stony hill, which protected his left, and the olive groves, which covered his right, there were many hundred yards of open ground without even a serviceable dip or undulation in which the line could be concealed. And this was almost the only battle in which we find record of his troops having suffered heavily by artillery fire before the clash of conflict began.

The second postulate of Wellington's system, as I have remarked above, was that his battle-line must be covered by such a powerful screen of skirmishers that the enemy's advanced line of *tirailleurs* should never be able to draw near enough to it to cause any serious molestation, that it should not be seriously engaged before the French supporting columns came up to the attack. His old experiences in Flanders in 1794 had taught him that the line cannot contend at advantage with a preponderant mass of light troops, which yield when charged, but return the moment that the charge is stopped. The device which he had thought out to provide against this danger was that he would always make his own skirmishing screen stronger than that of the enemy, so that the French *tirailleurs* should never be able to force it in. The moment that he assumed permanent command of the Peninsular Army, in

[1] *Memoirs of Foy*, ed. Girod de l'Ain, pp. 270–1.

April 1809, he set to work to secure this desideratum. His plan was to add to every brigade in his army an extra company of trained riflemen to reinforce the three light companies of the brigade, and to each division, when the composite Anglo-Portuguese divisions were formed, in 1810, a whole battalion of Portuguese *caçadores*, or light infantry. In April 1809 he broke up the oldest rifle battalion in the British Army, the 5th of the 60th regiment, and began to distribute a company of it to each of his brigades, save to those of the King's German Legion, which had separate rifle companies of their own. Next year, when he incorporated a Portuguese brigade of five battalions in nearly all his divisions, he took care to have a *caçador* battalion among the five, and this was always used in the divisional skirmishing line. The result of this arrangement was that if an Anglo-Portuguese division of the normal strength of two British and one Portuguese brigade, or eleven battalions in all, set itself out in battle array, it had no less than eighteen light companies to send forward into its skirmishing line—one each from ten line battalions, two of British rifles, six of *caçadores*. A French division of a similar strength of eleven battalions, put in front of the British line, would undoubtedly send out only its eleven *voltigeur* companies to form the covering screen for its supporting line of columns. Not unnaturally, as Wellington had calculated, the skirmishing line of the allies invariably contained and kept back the inferior skirmishing line of the enemy, and was never driven in till the French brought up their supporting columns into the fighting front, when, of course, the allied light troops had to retire on to the line in their rear. But the columns, having got up to the front and become engaged, had then to take the lead, and to go on to fight the hitherto intact British main line. In short, Wellington made his light infantry screen so thick and strong that he habitually smothered the French *tirailleurs*, and forced the hostile column to commit itself to the main fight without any protective sheathing. So strong was the British skirmishing screen that French contemporary

diarists often mistake it for a front line, and speak of their columns as piercing and driving back the first line of their adversaries, when really all that they had done was to drive in a powerful and obstinate chain of light troops.[1] Invariably, we may say, the French had to attack the two-deep line when the latter was intact, while their own columns had already been under fire for some time and, if not shaken, were at least no longer fresh. It will be asked why the marshals and generals of Napoleon did not deploy their columns before the moment of contact. The answer to this objection is, firstly, that they were strongly convinced that the column was the proper striking force to carry a given point, and they normally attacked not the whole British line simultaneously, but the particular point or points where they intended to break through. But secondly, that they sometimes *did* attempt to deploy, but always too late, since they waited till they had driven in the British skirmishing line, and tried to assume the thinner formation when they were already under fire and heavily engaged. I have come on several narratives dealing with attempts to deploy on the part of a French brigade or regiment which had forced its way to the front, and on every occasion it only led to confusion. When the Fusilier brigade fought Werlé's nine battalions at Albuera, an English diarist remarks that "during the close action I saw their officers endeavouring to deploy their columns, but all to no purpose. For as soon as the third of a company got out, they would immediately run back, in order to be covered by the front of their column". Similarly, Merle on the hill-top at Bussaco tried to deploy when he was already under the fire of Picton's line, and failed with disastrous results. The French, in short, could not deploy, because they were

[1] Note especially Vigo-Roussillon's account of Barrosa, when he speaks of his regiment as having pierced the "first British line", when all that they had done was to thrust back four companies of the 95th rifles and two light companies of the 20th Portuguese. Similarly Reynier's report on Bussaco says that Merle's division drove back Picton's front line, and only failed before his second. But this "front line" was only five light companies.

destitute by this time of their protective sheath of light troops, which (as Wellington had devised) had always been crushed in by the superior English skirmishing line. Nothing could be more inevitably productive of confusion and disorder than an attempt to deploy under heavy fire. Wherefore many of the French commanders never tried to do so at all, and thought it more safe to go on to the final shock with the battalions massed in their original formation of column of companies or column of divisions.

We now reach the third postulate of Wellington's system —the two-deep fighting line must be covered on its flanks, either by the ground, or by cavalry and artillery support, or by infantry prolonging the front beyond the enemy's immediate point of action. At Vimeiro, Wellesley had got his left wing so cleverly concealed that the French attempt to turn him was itself outflanked. At Talavera one of his wings was covered by a precipitous hill, the other by thick olive plantations. At Bussaco both the French attacks were hopelessly outflanked on each side, so that they could only strike frontally. At Salamanca the 3rd division, the striking force which won the battle, had its line covered on its outward flank by an English and a Portuguese brigade of cavalry. At Vittoria the whole French army was enveloped by the concentric and converging attack of the much longer British line. Only once, as far as I know, did the French get on to the flank of Wellington's fighting-line, and cause him trouble. This was at Fuentes de Oñoro, where the 7th division suffered some loss by being taken in flank by outlying French cavalry, and only escaped worse disaster because one battalion (the Chasseurs Britanniques) had time to adapt itself to the situation, and because a few British squadrons sacrificed themselves in stopping the enemy's superior horse. But there was one instance during the war which demonstrates clearly the terrible risk that the line might run, if it was not properly protected. At Albuera, Colborne's brigade of the 2nd division was thrown into action with its flank absolutely bare—there was no support within half a mile—by the recklessness of its divisional general, William Stewart. It was caught in flank

by two regiments of French light cavalry, and absolutely cut to pieces, with a loss of 1,200 men out of 1,600 present. Wellington would never have sent it forward without the proper support for its wings, and it is noteworthy that later in that same day Cole took the 4th division into action on the same hill and against the same enemy, with perfect success, because he had guarded one flank with a battalion in square, and the other with a second square and a brigade of cavalry.

These, then, were the necessary postulates required for the successful use of line against column, and, when they were duly borne in mind, victory was secure with any reasonable balance of numbers. The essential fact that lay below the oft-observed conclusion was simply that the two-deep line enabled a force to use every musket with effect, while the column of divisions put seven-ninths of the men forming it in a position where they could not shoot at all, and even the *ordre mixte* praised by Napoleon placed from seven-twelfths to two-thirds[1] of the rank and file in that same unhappy condition. But Albuera is the only fight in the war in which I have definite proof that the enemy fought in the *ordre mixte,* with deployed battalions and battalions in column alternately ranged in his front. Usually he came on in columns of divisions to the critical moment, and not unfrequently he had battalion behind battalion in each regiment. It was a gross order of fighting: but d'Erlon invented a worse and more clumsy formation at Waterloo, where he sent forward whole divisions with eight or nine battalions deployed one behind the other, so as to produce a front of 200 men and a depth of twenty-four—with only one man in twelve able to use his musket!

Normally, however, columns of divisions (double-companies) were the French order, i.e. a battalion of 900 men in six companies had a front of one hundred muskets, and 200 men in all able to fire, while 700 were in the rear

[1] If the *ordre mixte* was formed by a regiment of three battalions of 900 men each, only 720 out of 2,700 were in the first two ranks. If by a regiment of four battalions—two deployed, two in column on the flanks—the slightly better result of 1,320 men out of 3,600 able to use their muskets would result.

ranks, able to be shot but not to shoot. If an English battalion of equal strength lay in front, in its two-deep line, it gave a discharge of 900 muskets against one of 200; and this was not all. Its front was four times that of the French battalion, so that its fire lapped round the flanks of the advancing mass, and struck men in the rear ranks, demoralizing them because they had no power to reply. Often the British line, during the moments of fire-combat, threw forward its wings in a converging half-moon, and blazed into three sides of the column at once. This was done with great effect by the 43rd and 52nd at Bussaco against the French brigade (that of Simon), which came up the slope in front of them, battalion behind battalion, in the most vulnerable array. How could it be expected that the unhappy column could prevail? Effective against an enemy who allowed himself to be cowed and shaken by the sight of the formidable advancing mass, it was helpless against steady troops, who stood their ground and emptied their muskets as fast as they could load into a mark which it was impossible to miss.

But this is the mere physical aspect of such a combat. What was its moral result? Many French officers who served in the Peninsular War have left memoirs behind them. Very few of them seem to have got to the bottom of the matter. The only one of them, indeed, who has left a clear and philosophic summary of the consequences of attacking in heavy columns a well-placed British line is Bugeaud, whose interesting paragraphs I have already quoted in the pages of this volume which deal with the Battle of Maida.[1] He saw the moral influence of crushing fire from front and flank against a mass of which the greater part could take no retaliating share in the exchange of volleys, as well as the mere consequences in the casualty list. The others, even those of highest rank, seem merely to have been impressed with the losses. When Napoleon, before Waterloo, explained his plan of battle to Soult, the Marshal observed, "*Sire*, l'infanterie anglaise en duel c'est le diable." To which his master replied brutally, "Because you have been

[1] See pages 55–6 above.

beaten by Wellington you regard him as a good general: et moi je vous dis que Wellington est un mauvais général, et que les Anglais sont de mauvaises troupes: ce sera l'affaire d'un déjeuner." This strange explosion raises doubts as to the soundness of the Emperor's views on tactics—or his sanity. But what had Soult made out of his Peninsular experiences? We have his deductions in a letter to the Minister of War, Clarke, in September 1813, wherein he complains bitterly of the shooting power of the British rifle companies. His particular grievance is that his officers get hit in numbers quite out of proportion to his men. "These carabineers do the outpost and skirmishing work. In battle they are specially ordered to pick off the officers. When senior officers go to the front, either to make observations or to encourage their troops, they are almost always hit. This manner of making war is most annoying to us. We lose so many officers that after two consecutive actions the battalion is almost destitute of them. In our casualty lists the proportion is often one officer to eight men. I have seen units where there were only two or three officers left, though not one-sixth of the rank and file were *hors de combat.*" The real explanation of this disproportion was that in columnar attacks the French officers led their men with great gallantry in the attack, and stayed behind, trying to hold the troops together, when the break-up began. English observers sometimes note that a last desperate resistance was made by a knot of officers backed by very few rank and file. Soult had got hold of a symptom when he thought he had discovered the disease. He makes no suggestion that the aimed fire of a skirmishing line of good light infantry should be met by a multiplication of his own skirmishers.

Reille has almost as great experience of the Peninsular battles as Soult. Napoleon asked him on the morn of Waterloo what he thought of the English infantry. "Well placed", answered the corps-commander, "as Wellington knows how to place it, I regard the English infantry as 'inexpugnable', because of its calm tenacity and the superiority of its fire. Before you can get to close quarters

you may expect to see one-half of the attacking force knocked over. But it manœuvres with less agility than our infantry. Though you cannot beat it by a frontal attack, you may be able to do so by manœuvring." Irritated by this discouraging judgement, the Emperor, who had never seen the English infantry in action, broke off the conversation by an exclamation of incredulity.

Foy, in his private journal, under the date September 23, 1811, made an observation somewhat similar to that of Reille: "I think the English infantry superior to our own in equal numbers and on a limited battle front. This opinion I carefully keep to myself: it is better that the rank and file should despise the enemy as well as hate him." And again, under the date June 23, 1815: "You may in a campaign turn, check, or molest the English; but in pitched battle there is no enemy more redoubtable. Their infantry is solid under fire and well drilled, its fire is perfect. The officers are the bravest and the most patriotic in all Europe. Wellington is not a genius, but he knows his trade perfectly, and is liked and trusted by his men."

Neither Soult, Reille, nor Foy makes any mention of line and column. None of them seem to have drawn the conclusion which Bugeaud, then only a *chef de bataillon*, reached—that it was the French tactical formation which made victory impossible.

Officers of less intelligence explained their defeats by a fictitious inferiority of numbers. Both Merle at Bussaco and Victor at Barrosa state in their dispatches that their troops were overwhelmed by an enemy of far superior strength. In each case, as a matter of fact, they possessed a decidedly larger force than the enemy who flung them downhill. And if generals wrote thus, it was only natural that captains and lieutenants followed their example. I have never, odd though the fact may seem, discovered any contemporary writer save Bugeaud who got to the heart of the matter. He alone described the psychology of the huddled column going forward to inevitable defeat, and saw the reason of it.

VI

TALES OF SECRET SERVICE (I)

The Baron de Agra, 1808–9

IT is not often that a British Foreign Minister has been completely duped for a couple of months or more by an impudent secret agent of a hostile power, and induced to discuss with him matters of high importance, military and political, on which it was most essential that the enemy should be kept in the dark. Such, however, was the ill-luck of George Canning between September and November 1808. That the adventurer was ultimately detected, and went to the scaffold six months later, must have been a poor satisfaction to the Minister, when he reflected on the indiscretions of which he had been guilty.

Yet the circumstances were such that the success of the trick played upon Canning is in no wise surprising. And the very impudence of it was in great measure responsible for its having caught him unawares.

Napoleon's infamous kidnapping of Ferdinand VII of Spain, the *Complot de Bayonne*, had taken place in May. The unfortunate young King had been shut up in Valençay, and on the news of his captivity indignant Spain had flared up into half a dozen local and independent insurrections, rather to the surprise of the kidnapper, who had thought that a disarmed people, long oppressed by a corrupt government, would have no heart to rise against the invader. Had he not made his preparation by garrisoning Madrid, and seizing the best of the Spanish fortresses, St. Sebastian and Pampeluna,

Barcelona and Figueras, under false pretences of lending aid to the Bourbons against perfidious Albion? For, indeed,—

> No contento el malvado
> Luchar con desarmado
> Oculta con oliva
> Su infame puñal,

as the Spanish war-song very truly declared.

There was for several months no Spanish Central Government opposing the French invader. Each province uttered its defiance, slew or chased away governors who had submitted to the French usurpation, and tried to raise a raw army of some sort. Then most of the insurrectionary juntas made, as one of their first efforts, the attempt to get into communication with England, the old enemy of Napoleon, and to beg for money and arms. For the aid of a British expeditionary force they were at first too proud to ask, being wholly unconscious of the inefficiency of patriotic levies to cope with the French *Grande Armée*.

In June the first emissaries from the local juntas began to arrive in London; in July there were four or five separate parties of them, not in the least in touch with each other, and each thinking their own needs the most important. In August there was quite an invasion of Spanish petitioners of all sorts—some of them set merely on private ends or grievances—shipowners who wanted their recently captured vessels released, now that Spain was no longer a hostile power, military adventurers who were ready to raise regiments, merchants who had schemes for the reopening of the long-barred trade between Britain and Spanish America. Canning had to see and to sift them all—some of his visitors were persons of high political importance, some mere self-seekers.

On August 19th the British frigate *Seine*, cruising off the Biscay coast, to watch Bilbao and St. Sebastian, both in French hands, was hailed by a fishing-boat under Spanish colours, which had run out from the little port of Orrio. From it there came on board three well-dressed Spanish

gentlemen, who declared to the captain that they were bearers of dispatches from the imprisoned King of Spain for the British Government, which should be delivered at once. Ferdinand, they said, had succeeded in smuggling out letters from his prison, despite of the vigilance of Talleyrand's minions. This had been managed through the youngest of the three travellers, Don Enrique Ramirez de Arellano, son of the Marquis of Guadalcázar, the King's private secretary, one of the few Spaniards who had been carried off to Valençay along with their master. He had been allowed to see his father, who had passed the correspondence on to him, with orders to transmit it to Don Francisco Godinez de Pareja, Baron de Agra, a trustworthy person who had done secret work for Ferdinand when he was only a much-oppressed heir-apparent in his father's unhappy time. The letters had been passed on to the Baron at Tours, and he had made such haste that he had got from the heart of France to the Biscay coast in six days.

The Baron was a man of about forty-five, a dignified and plausible person, very fluent both in Spanish and in French, but (as was natural) speaking not a word of English. The third person of the party was a cousin of the Baron's, one Don José Godinez, who played a minor part in the proceedings, and was the only one of the three who escaped the scaffold in the tragic end of the story. The Baron showed the captain of the *Seine* a sealed letter addressed to the British Foreign Minister and a thin dispatch-box, also sealed, which he said was to be entrusted to the minister to be forwarded elsewhere. Both were sealed in an odd way, with a reverse impression of one of the few *peseta* pieces which had been struck at the Spanish mint for Ferdinand, during the troubled weeks when he was King-regnant at Madrid. The Baron explained that his Majesty had no seal of his own left him.

The captain thought that the dispatches must be important; it was obvious that it would be highly advantageous to get in touch with the imprisoned King, of whose

condition and intentions no one in England or Spain had any idea since he had disappeared from Bayonne into French captivity. Accordingly he took upon himself the responsibility of running across the Bay of Biscay, and of dropping the Baron and his companions at Portsmouth, after which he returned to his cruising. From Portsmouth the three Spaniards took post-chaise for London, and descended at Warren's Hotel, Charles Street, St. James's, on or shortly before the last day of August Next morning the Baron and the soi-disant son of Ferdinand's private secretary presented themselves at the Foreign Office, and were received in a long audience by Mr. Canning. No doubt whatever appears to have been felt about their being what they represented themselves to be. The Baron was a man of the world, who spoke easy and polite French, and showed a complete knowledge of the politics of Spain and France during the present generation. His companion was a good-looking, brisk young man, of great self-confidence, and was a quick master of replies. They explained their mission to Canning, and he was ready to discuss it at length.

The letter addressed to the British Foreign Minister turned out, when opened, not to be signed by King Ferdinand himself, but by his brother Prince Carlos, who was his fellow-prisoner, the Prince's private seal was appended, and the document was countersigned by the Marquis of Guadalcázar. It commended to the minister the bearer, the Baron de Agra, "our friend and confidant", and begged that he might be aided to transmit to the Viceroy of Mexico certain documents of primary importance contained in a sealed dispatch-box, which the Baron showed. These documents were said to be directions to the Viceroy to make sure of the crown of Mexico for his master, even in case of the loss of Spain. Don Carlos added that he had not been able to get his brother to write in his own hand, because "certain timid advisers" had warned His Majesty of the danger which would accrue if he was found corresponding directly with England. It was

suggested that the British Foreign Secretary might send a covering letter along with the dispatches for Mexico, to the effect that they had come to him from trustworthy hands, and that it was to be desired that the contents should receive immediate attention.

Spanish archivists, skilled in the habitual language of state documents of the early XIXth century, say that the phraseology of the dispatch to Canning was such as no Spanish prince of that time would have used, and that the signature at the end was not in the proper form employed by junior members of the Royal Family. But this could hardly have been known to Canning, and for a reason which seemed to him sufficient he refrained from exhibiting the letter to any of the Spaniards then in London, who might have been struck by these abnormalities.

For though the Minister seems to have had no doubt concerning the genuineness of the document, or the good faith of its bearer, there was an obstacle which prevented him from carrying out the Baron's request, and sending him, or his companions, or all of them, to Mexico without delay. Canning had scruples about acting on behalf of an imprisoned King, of whose character and intentions he was doubtful, when a central national government was just about to be formed in Spain. He thought that Great Britain ought not to interfere in the affairs of Spanish America without the knowledge and approval of the Spanish Home Government. The captive King might be sending orders which would clash with those of the "Supreme Central Junta", which was due ere long to meet, and to assume responsibility for the whole Spanish empire on the other side of the Atlantic. Affairs in the Peninsula had been moving very fast during the recent month, and he was being kept in constant touch with them by British vessels carrying the news almost from day to day.

Dupont's army had surrendered on July 20th, the French had evacuated Madrid on August 1st, and the representatives of all the local juntas had agreed to meet at Aranjuez in September. All this was well known to Canning

when the Baron presented himself in Whitehall on September 1st. So while listening to all the arguments about the necessity for sending on the dispatches to Mexico, he thought that it would be incorrect to do so without authorization from Spain. Whatever was due to happen in America on the first news of the kidnapping at Bayonne would surely have happened already: for nearly four months had elapsed since that tragedy: and another month would have to be added (perhaps more) to allow of Agra's packet reaching Vera Cruz. A Spanish ambassador would soon appear in London, and the whole affair ought to be placed before him. As a matter of fact such a personage was forthcoming only in October, when the Central Junta appointed Admiral Apodaca Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. James. The Admiral was already on the spot, having been one of the deputies sent to ask British aid by the Junta of Andalusia in July.

Meanwhile Canning, all through September, continued to receive visits from the Baron, and to confer with him about the help which England was giving Spain, and the possibilities—good and evil—of what might happen (or rather might have happened) in America. On October 1st the Baron presented, with much diffidence and expressions of troubled self-esteem, a note in which he said that although his master had forbidden him to make any monetary demands on the British Government, he had not been actually forbidden to take any assistance offered him. And he enclosed a letter of exchange drawn on the Viceroy of Mexico for 4,000 dollars, to be paid through a banker, Don Firmin Tarlet. Canning, without the least hesitation, sent him the £800 which such a bill represented, and asked him to wait a little longer.

If he had known what the Baron was doing in September and early October, the money would certainly not have been sent. De Agra and his companions were carefully avoiding all touch with the numerous Spaniards who were now present in London, and had refused several invitations to attend meetings and public dinners offered by various

city companies and patriotic societies to the representatives of insurgent Spain. The fact was that there existed a small, but not quite negligible, number of Spaniards who might know who the Baron *was*, and a still smaller number who might—unlikely as it seemed—know who Don Enrique de Arellano *was not*. If any of the deputies or intriguers now in London happened to have been in touch before now with the French secret service, they might have met the Baron de Agra under another name. And if—though this was more improbable—any of the recent arrivals had been much about the Spanish Court of late, they might chance to have been well acquainted with the Arellano family, of which the Marquis of Guadalcázar was the head. Wherefore the Baron and his young friend kept very quiet. The only things which we know of them are that they did much writing, and that they got a London die-sinker, ignorant of the Spanish language, to cut them an armorial seal, inscribed SELLO PRIVADO DE S.M.C. F. VII—Private seal of his Catholic Majesty King Ferdinand VII. It did not at all resemble genuine Spanish royal seals.

Knowing these facts—which were very much unknown to Canning in October 1808—we need have no hesitation in explaining who the Baron really was. Talleyrand, as Napoleon's Minister of Foreign Affairs, had many disreputable but capable employés of various nationality. Among them was a renegade Spanish friar, one Luis Guttierez, who had been expelled from the Trinitarian Order some twelve or fifteen years back, when Spain and the French Republic had been at war, during the period before the Peace of Basle. Whether Brother Luis had fled the Spanish realm on account of personal scandals, or whether he had been one of the few Spaniards with republican sympathies who existed under the late Bourbon regime, we do not know; the former is to be presumed. When he is next discoverable, about 1802–3, he was ostensibly the editor of a newspaper called the *Gaceta Española de Bayona*, published at Bayonne in Spanish, and for Spanish consumption, but devoted to French propa-

ganda. But this was only part of his activity; he had long been the agent on the frontier to whom all French secret emissaries in Spain, or Spaniards in French pay, made their reports for transmission to the confidential department of Talleyrand's Foreign Office. As to his recent doings, he had been the scribe who drew up for Murat his proclamation to the Spanish nation when the "Lieutenant of the Emperor" entered the Peninsula in March 1808, and he had translated into Spanish many documents which Maret, later Duc de Bassano, had drawn up for publication during the period of intrigue which preceded the kidnapping of Ferdinand VII.

The *Gaceta de Bayona* stopped publication on July 22, 1808, a more hazardous but much more lucrative employment having been found for its editor. Two schemes were in hand. Firstly, it was most important for the French Government to discover what was the precise amount of support which Great Britain was about to give to the Spanish insurgents. It must be remembered that the present and the future were equally problematic. Dupont's surrender at Baylen happened only two days before Guttierez's newspaper office put up its shutters, and it, as also Sir Arthur Wellesley's landing in Portugal on August 3rd, was unknown at Bayonne. Secondly, there was a chance that something might be done towards getting into touch with the Francophil party in Spanish America. Discontent in the colonies was rife; it might be diverted into a direction unfavourable to the Bourbon dynasty, and favourable either to a declaration in favour of the new French King of Spain, Joseph Bonaparte, or (at worst) into disavowal of the Spanish insurrection, and the proclamation of colonial independence. Guttierez's two companions were his brother José—a much younger man than himself, who had recently been acting as interpreter on the staff of Marshal Lannes—and Juan Enrique Goicoechea, a young Basque, who had been for the last six years a correspondence-clerk in the Franco-Spanish Bank of Messrs. Blaque de Mirlan at Bayonne. The Baron had offered him the

dangerous job of representing the son of the Marquis of Guadalcázar, because he was presentable, unscrupulous, and a fluent penman both in French and in Spanish. The bulk of the documents with which the party had furnished themselves were in his neat and flowing script. Only the signature of Prince Carlos had been added by the Baron himself.

The scruples of Mr. Canning as to transmitting correspondence to Mexico, or allowing secret agents to go thither, were most exasperating to Guttierez, since they stood in the way of the completion of one half of his task. But it is probable that he succeeded in transmitting some of Canning's confidences to Paris, through obscure French secret agents in London, who were certainly in existence, just as obscure English secret agents were to be found in Paris, as one of the later stories in this volume shows. But information of this kind was not so valuable in September or October as it would have been in July or August, since Great Britain had shown her hand, and was giving every form of support to insurgent Spain.

The Baron began to get restive when the weeks slipped away, and he was told to await a Spanish ambassador, and submit his documents for approval before they could cross the Atlantic. Considering what the documents were, to the best of our knowledge, it was not at all to his interest that they should be scrutinized by patriotic Spanish eyes. When Admiral Apodaca received his letter of appointment as Minister Plenipotentiary in mid-October, Canning began to press the Baron to get things settled with him. But the adventurer could not, and would not, show the Admiral the contents of his sealed dispatch-box, being, as he insisted, the King's personal representative, and independent of any obligations to the new Spanish Government. Whereupon Apodaca gave him a passport for Spain, insisting that he should go to Aranjuez and make matters straight with the Central Junta. And Canning, agreeing with the Admiral, pressed him to depart at once, gave him £200 for expenses, and on November 20th shipped

him and his party on the brigantine *Primrose*, bound for Corunna.

Now the Baron did not at all want to go to Corunna, still less to show his supposed documents to the Supreme Central Junta. The *Primrose* being wind-bound in Portland Bay for six days after its start, he and his younger companion made excuses for going ashore at Weymouth, and could not be found when the wind shifted and the vessel sailed off. His other companion, the so-called cousin, remained on board—apparently charged with some separate mission. We may as well finish with him at once. He landed at Corunna on December 10th, and evidently did not want to be identified there, for within half an hour of his arrival he had procured a post-chaise and horses, and was pushing on for Castile—where the French were now advancing, for Blake had lost the Battle of Espinosa on November 11th. Soult was pushing forward, and Napoleon had just occupied Madrid on December 2nd. At Villafranca, on the borders of Galicia and Leon, José Guttierez was arrested as a suspicious person and sent back to Corunna, where on being examined by the local police he was recognized (December 18, 1808) as a person who had been seen with the French army four months back, and as being the brother of Luis Guttierez, whom several witnesses remembered as a French agent at Bayonne. When he protested that he was attached to the mission of the Baron de Agra, and was well known to the British Foreign Office, the Corunna magistrates referred his claim to General Broderick, British liaison officer with the Galician Junta, who wrote to Whitehall to warn Canning of the doubtful record of this prisoner. It was also suggested that the whole character of the Baron's mission had better be looked into. Meanwhile José remained in prison at Corunna, and was still there when Moore's army retreated on to that fortress, and fought its last battle on the hills outside (January 16th). Corunna surrendered after the embarkation of the British, and the younger Guttierez must have been one of the several

hundred prisoners, French and Francophil, whom Soult is recorded to have delivered from the dungeons of its citadel. We know nothing more of his fate. Probably he found employment in King Joseph's service, as did so many other scores of *Afrancesados*.

His companions were less fortunate. The Baron and the soi-disant son of the Marquis returned to London from Weymouth, to the surprise and vexation of Mr. Canning, who had supposed them well on the way to Spain. Writing to the Minister at great length, Guttierez proceeded to assure him that, by the last news, the cause of the insurrectionary Government in Spain was lost. Some of its members had notoriously sold themselves to Bonaparte; in a few weeks the French would be in possession of the whole country. The only reasonable thing was to proceed with the plan of saving the colonies, for Spain was lost. The future of Spanish America was in the hands of Great Britain at the moment. Let the King's dispatches be sent off without a day's further delay. As to going to Spain to confer with the Central Junta, it was useless. If told to carry out the dictated arrangements, he would prefer to throw up the whole matter and retire into private life.

Nevertheless Canning persisted, and only varied his directions by advising the Baron to take an English ship for Lisbon, and make for Seville, where the Junta was said to be reassembling after its flight from Aranjuez. Intending, probably, to disappear in Lisbon, and find his way somehow to the French, Guttierez sailed thither in December, and arrived on January 1, 1809. His first action was to visit Mr. Villiers, the English Minister, to show him Canning's passport, and to explain his intentions with regard to America. By an extraordinary chance the Spanish Minister at Lisbon, Don Pascuel Tenorio, was shown into the room while the "Baron" was explaining his views to Mr. Villiers. Hearing a Spaniard talking about America to the British Minister, he conceived that some sort of intrigue was going on between the British and the colonists. Since the Buenos Aires Expedition of 1807, this idea was

always in the heads of Spanish statesmen. Accordingly he resolved to "pump" this mysterious gentleman, and invited him to come home and dine with him. The Baron tried to get off, but was taken away *nolens volens* by Tenorio, who (as he says) "plied him with the rich wines of Portugal", and got him to talk rather freely. What he said and did not say, what he knew and did not know, seemed so suspicious to the Minister that he resolved to find out more about him. The Baron was followed, without his knowledge, by two of the Minister's secret agents, one of whom had been at Bayonne and recognized him. This man (rather incautiously) dropped into a café to which the stranger had betaken himself, and suddenly saluted him by the name of Guttierez as an old friend. The Baron showed great confusion, denied that he owned any such name, and bolted out of the café. Running straight to his lodgings, he gave out that he had to go to Oporto to find a cousin whom he was expecting to meet there, and made off with his young friend in a hastily hired carriage, though he had no passports for Oporto, but only a British and a Spanish one for Seville.

Meanwhile the Spanish Minister had gone to the Portuguese police, and denounced Guttierez as a dangerous and well-known French agent. Acting very promptly, the chief of the Lisbon Secret Service sent after him a party of his police-cavalry, who caught the carriage six leagues out on the Oporto road and arrested its occupants.

In the Lisbon central prison both Guttierez and Goioechea were subjected to a sort of "third degree" interrogation both by Tenorio and by the Portuguese Chief of Police. Several persons having identified him as an agent well known in the French service at Bayonne, he could not deny his identity, and finally broke down, and began making promises of having many revelations to discover, if harsh measures were not applied to him. However, the Portuguese Government extradited him to the Spanish authorities, and he was removed to Seville in January 1809.

There he and his companion were kept for three months, subjected to constant interrogations, and his papers were examined. The counterfeit seal of Ferdinand VII made in London had been used largely upon them. A précis of the proceedings was sent to the British Foreign Office, as it was acknowledged that Canning had acted with scrupulous correctness with regard to allowing the "Baron" to communicate with America, and had insisted on referring everything to the Central Junta. The famous royal letter to the Viceroy of Mexico turned out to be a *défaitist* document: Ferdinand was made to say in it that he hoped that the Viceroy would do everything to prevent a breach between the home country and the colonies, even to the extent of acknowledging the new King at Madrid. Anything was better than that Mexico should fall into the hands of the English. There was a "royal decree" with the false seal at the bottom of it, establishing a council of regency for Mexico composed of Francophils—Azanza, ex-Viceroy of Mexico, but now a tool of Joseph Bonaparte, had supplied the names—and a forged passport from Admiral Apodaca to pass the bearer to Mexico, copied from the real passport which the Admiral had given him for Seville. All the documents were in the clerkly hand of the young Juan Enrique Goioechea—the Baron himself was not a neat penman.

Among odd confidences extracted from the chief prisoner were several interesting and correct facts—such as that Talleyrand (whom he had seen several times) had endeavoured to dissuade Napoleon from his abominable Spanish venture, and that the whole course of events had not fallen out as originally planned by the Emperor, who had been forced to change all details owing to the Aranjuez revolution of March 1808, and the unexpected proclamation of Ferdinand as King. He also mentioned that Maret, the Minister of State, had showed him a letter to President Jefferson at Washington, advising him to see that Great Britain did not seize Mexico or the Spanish West Indies, and trying to persuade him that war between the United States and the British was inevitable.

All these revelations, however genuine, did not avail to save the lives of the adventurers. Both Guttierez and Goioechea were "garotted" in front of the Central Prison of Seville on April 15, 1809.

George Jackson, the secretary of Frere, the British Envoy at Seville, writes in his diary next day: "We had yesterday a spectacle which attracted thousands from near and far—the execution of the Friar who edited the *Bayonne Gazette*. He had been to England applying to Mr. Canning for passports for America. He was suspected, it appears, and on his arrival at Lisbon was arrested and brought to Seville. It is said that he made very important disclosures." I have seen no other allusion to the affair, and the story is probably new to English readers, though Spaniards got to know of it by the Marquis de Villa Urrutia's interesting article in the *Revista de Archivos* of 1909.

VII

TALES OF SECRET SERVICE (II)

Brother James Robertson in the Baltic, 1808

THIS tale, like that of Louis Guttierez soi-disant Baron de Agra, deals with one who started life as a novice in a monastery. But James Robertson was not a renegade who fled to the secular world in disgrace like the Spanish friar. When his strange episode of secret service was over, he returned to the community in which he had been reared, and lived there to the end of his days, much respected, and the patron of a benevolent institution of which he had become the founder.

There was an ancient house of Scottish Benedictines in the free imperial city of Ratisbon on the Danube. Ever since its foundation in the XVIth century it was maintained by the sons of Scottish Catholic families, who could not enter into the monastic life in their own land, where the black frock of the monk was anathema. To this house of exiles there came, in the quiet years just before the outbreak of the Revolutionary War in 1792, a young Scot of old Catholic lineage, James Robertson, introduced by his uncle, Father Marianus Brockie.

The Scottish Benedictines of Ratisbon had long ceased to be Jacobites or enemies to the British Government. Ratisbon was, before the break up of the Holy Roman Empire, a frequent meeting-place of its Diets, and to these Diets British envoys often came, for there were Ministers accredited to the Diet as well as Ministers accredited to the Austrian Kaiser. Robertson tells us, in his little book of adventure, that when British diplomats came to

Ratisbon they had fallen into the habit of applying to his superior, Abbot Arbuthnot, for assistance in the secretarial and interpreting line. One of his contemporaries, Father Horn, was so frequently employed by Mr. Drake, that when Napoleon started the cry of "murder" against that unlucky gentleman, and kidnapped his colleague Rumbold, the good father had to disappear forthwith.

Now, among casual visitors to Ratisbon there had come in 1795 Colonel Charles Lennox of the 35th Foot, one of the M.P.'s for the County of Sussex, and next of kin to the aged Duke of Richmond. He called on the Superior of the Scottish Benedictines and asked for a cicerone and interpreter, for German was to him a tongue unknown. Father Arbuthnot put him in charge of James Robertson, who was a plump, merry young monk, with a gift for getting on with everybody, and an inexhaustible flow of conversation. The Colonel and the Benedictine agreed excellently, and parted after a few days—never likely to meet again.

In 1806 Colonel Lennox succeeded to the Dukedom of Richmond, and in 1807 he was made Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Meanwhile Brother James had discovered that he had no great vocation for a sedentary life in Ratisbon, and had applied for missionary work. He was sent to his native Scotland in 1797, and laboured for eight years ministering to a scattered congregation in Galloway. In 1805 he was transferred to Ireland, and was working in Dublin when the Duke of Richmond came over St. George's Channel as Viceroy.

With some trepidation Brother James (or to be more correct Brother Gallus, for he had taken that name "in religion", in memory of St. Gall, the Celtic Apostle of the Alps), resolved that he would venture to recall his existence to the Viceroy. He did so, and found that he was remembered and that pleasantly: he and the Duke interchanged opinions on Germany, then in the abyss of Rheinbund degradation. And the monk remarked to the Duke that if ever he wanted information about things on the Danube

or the Elbe under French domination, he himself was the man who could get it, for he could pass as a German anywhere, and as a priest he could slip from one religious house to another unsuspected. Nothing came of this for a year, and Robertson thought that he had passed out of the Viceroy's mind.

In the spring of 1808, however, he received an unexpected reminder that his offer had not been forgotten. This was a letter from Sir Arthur Wellesley—then (though the fact is often forgotten) Secretary for Ireland and a member of the House of Commons. Wellesley wrote to him to the effect that he had been recommended by the Viceroy as a man of ability with a thorough knowledge of Germany. He was asked to come to London, and to send his address to Sir Arthur at his private residence in Harley Street. This Brother James, agreeably surprised, did without delay. But there was then an interval of many weeks without any summons being sent him, and fearing that the idea had fallen through, he accepted the post of tutor and secretary in the family of a Roman Catholic peer.

Hardly had he done this, when he got, on May 31, 1808, the summons from Wellesley which he had given up the hope of receiving. On presenting himself he had a definite offer made him. "I know, Mr. Robertson, that you are a man of resource, and you say that you are a man of courage. Would you go to Germany at a day's notice on a secret mission?" "That would I with the utmost alacrity," replied the monk. "I should be working for the cause of my religion, and the cause of every people in Europe, against the most unjust of oppressors." Wellesley then explained to him that there was a good reason for sending an emissary to North Germany, and added, after his sardonic fashion, that the last two gentlemen who had gone in that direction were "missing", and were believed to have been shot. As Robertson persisted in his offer, he was told that he should see Mr. Canning, and a few days later, on June 10th, the monk called again on the General, and was driven over to Downing Street by him. There after

some waiting, he was taken in to see Mr. Canning. According to Robertson's idea the Foreign Secretary did not seem much impressed with him, and not perhaps without cause, for the visitor was a round, merry little man with a great flow of language, not at all of the type of the mysterious and taciturn secret agent of common belief.

However, Canning informed his visitor that he would be given his chance, if he cared to take it, remembering that several British agents in Germany had disappeared of late. The Duke of Richmond had a good opinion of his plausibility and readiness, and Sir Arthur Wellesley was anxious that a certain experiment should be tried. Had Mr. Robertson any demands to make? The only answer was that he had an aged mother and two sisters in Scotland, and that if he never came back from Germany, he trusted that the British Government would provide a small pension for them. For this, the Foreign Secretary replied, there would be no difficulty, and he made a note of the point on paper.

Robertson was then handed over for instructions to Bartholomew Frere, who had been Secretary of Legation at Madrid in 1802–4 and knew Spain well. This was the brother of John Hookham Frere, who wrote the inimitable comic poetry of the *Anti-Jacobin*, and was destined in the following winter to quarrel so bitterly with Sir John Moore.

The mission on which Robertson was to be sent requires a word of explanation. When Napoleon was planning his treacherous attack on Spain, and the deposition of the Bourbons, his preparations were lengthy and devious. One of them had been to disarm his unsuspecting ally as far as possible before the *coup d'état* came off. And with this object he had requisitioned the pick of the Spanish army for service in the North. The excuse was the danger in the Baltic, where the Emperor's Danish allies were liable to be overwhelmed by the combination of the Swedes and the British Navy, which dominated all the waterways of the Belts and the Sound. Since the Copenhagen expedition of 1807, and the capture of the Danish fleet, a Swedish-

British raid in greater force seemed more possible than ever. So at least said Bonaparte to the imbecile Godoy; and the latter duly supplied 15,000 of his best troops, under the command of the Marquis of La Romana, one of the few Spanish generals who were both honest and capable, and therefore one whom Godoy was glad to see out of Spain. His subordinates were also in large measure officers whom Godoy distrusted, as having shown themselves not sufficiently sycophantic in their bearing toward himself.

So after an endless march across France, the Rhineland, and Hanover, La Romana's army had been lodged on the Danish border, at Hamburg and Lübeck, and on Danish soil at Altona and Glückstadt in Holstein. Here Canning and Frere and Wellesley believed that they were still lying in June 1808. But as a matter of fact one of Napoleon's last moves, in preparation for the kidnapping at Bayonne in May, had been to dislocate the little Spanish army in the North, and to spread it piecemeal all over the isles and the peninsula of Denmark. Marshal Bernadotte, commanding the French forces on the Baltic, had placed six Spanish battalions in the royal island of Zeeland, mixed up with Danish troops, four more in Fünen, the central isle of the Danish group, where La Romana himself had been told to take up his headquarters at Nyborg. Another regiment was in Langeland, far out to sea, and most of the cavalry and the rest of the infantry were in the coast-towns of Jutland, mixed up with a Dutch contingent and Danish militia.

This was not known either in London or in Spain. And it was believed at the Foreign Office that La Romana's troops were still concentrated in Holstein and about Hamburg. The Marquis was known to be a patriotic Spaniard, and no friend to France: wherefore it had occurred to both Wellesley and to Frere, who knew La Romana well, and had often conversed with him on politics at Madrid, that something might be done in the way of offering him help to escape with his army by sea. The same idea had occurred to the deputies from the Asturian insurgents, who had

reached London on June 6th, and had just been interviewing Canning.

Accordingly Bartholomew Frere explained to Robertson that, if he would take the risk, he should be landed by smugglers somewhere on the North German coast, should make his way to Hamburg, and there open up the plan to the Marquis. Of course, Frere might have misjudged his man, and a secret agent bringing such proposals might simply be handed over to the French and shot. But Frere was sure that Romana would do nothing of the sort. The messenger could be given no formal credentials, in case he should fall into the hands of the French; but he was told that he should ask the Marquis to remember a certain talk that he had once had with Frere in a certain room at Toledo, sitting in front of a picture of St. Peter and St. John by Rafael Mengs. And he was given a scrap of paper on which was written in Frere's hand a short Latin tag or proverb, which would recall the conversation. As to ways and means, Robertson should be accredited to Mr. Mackenzie of the Foreign Office, who from the newly captured isle of Heligoland was directing secret service business which embraced Holland and North Germany, and was the man to whom all secret agents in the North made their reports. Mackenzie would give him some thalers for present needs, and verbal credentials to a banker in Hamburg, who would ask no questions, and was good for any reasonable sum of money. The message to La Romana was to the effect that the British Government was prepared to secure the evasion of his army, and would land him wherever he pleased—in Minorca, or Cadiz, or the Canaries, or even in South America if he preferred that destination. No pledges whatever about his further intentions were asked for.

Robertson memorized all these instructions, and was run across to Heligoland before he was three days older. Then difficulties began: Mr. Mackenzie was helpful, but he found that the smugglers, on whom he had been relying, disliked the idea of carrying a secret agent to Germany.

At last a very ruffianly fellow was got to undertake the task for a round sum. The monk's few hours on the smuggler's smack were the most unpleasant of his whole journey. When they were well inside the mouth of the Weser, a French revenue cutter came tacking after them. They had the heels of her, and ran at dusk upstream; but as they anchored a boat was seen approaching. The smuggler then assured his passenger that if this was the French *douaniers*, bent on a search, he and his crew were not going to be shot for carrying spies. Overboard Brother James should go, before the Frenchmen came on deck. "And I verily believe that the fate of Jonah would have been mine, had the boat been what we feared that it was", writes the monk. Fortunately the visitors were only local smugglers come to greet a friend, and next day the traveller got safely ashore far up the Weser.

From thence he walked to Bremen, where he had to provide himself with a new identity and some sort of passport. The plan which he had thought out was simple. He had a friend in Scotland named Adam Rohrauer, born in Bremen, who had settled for good in Britain, and whose whole family had left the old Hanseatic city many years ago. His first step was to make a call on the pastor of the parish where Rohrauer had been born, to represent himself as that individual, and to get a birth certificate in his name. With this he went to the municipal offices, and claiming to be a native of Bremen recently returned to his birthplace for a few days, he obtained a permit for Hamburg. This he got endorsed, without much trouble, with the visé of the French Resident. The amount of perjury and forgery involved gave the clerical conscience a twinge, but was condoned after mature consideration, on the ground that the matter could not possibly do any harm to the real Rohrauer in Edinburgh, and that anything was permissible for the good cause and against the French.

So as Adam Rohrauer, formerly of Bremen, a commercial traveller in a long snuff-coloured coat, the adventurer came to Hamburg, and there learned for certain what he had

already been told on hearsay, that La Romana and his army had been moved many weeks back into the Danish isles and northern Jutland. For a moment this seemed to wreck his whole scheme, for while he could pass anywhere in Germany with his fluent tongue, he knew not a word of Danish, and could not get any accurate information as to where the Spaniards had gone. The banker on whom he could draw for money showed such trepidation on being questioned on military and political matters, and asked to transmit letters, that Brother James cleared out of the bank with his bag of thalers as fast as he could, fearing that he would be betrayed.

On inquiry he found that the only Spaniards left in the neighbourhood were a depot of 400 sick, at Altona, just across the Holstein border. To visit this party he accordingly went, with the plea that he wanted to find out where the various regiments of La Romana's army had got to, as he was the representative of a firm which dealt in colonial wares (smuggled, of course), and thought that the Spanish officers must be languishing in northern solitudes for the cigars and chocolate which had been procurable in Hamburg. The first person to whom he introduced himself was the military chaplain or almoner in charge of the spiritual affairs of the hospital, and their conversation had to be in Latin, for the Spaniard knew neither German nor French. After a very few sentences Brother James discovered that he was talking to a man mad with rage at the half-known news of the treachery at Bayonne and the kidnapping of King Ferdinand—as all Spanish clergy without exception were at that time. Taking a considerable risk, he explained that he was a priest and not a commercial traveller, and that he had come with a secret message for La Romana's army from the patriots of Spain. The almoner embraced him, and took him to see a convalescent captain, who spoke fluent French and was a good patriot. This officer could give Robertson all the information that he required about the disposition of the various Spanish corps, since he had been sending off

small parties of recovered sick to join their regiments week by week. But he said that to transmit letters to Nyborg was beyond his power.

The complete dislocation of Romana's army struck Robertson with some dismay. However, he resolved to persevere in his errand—the mentality of the two Spaniards upon whom he had chanced was encouraging. So having purchased a consignment of chocolate and cigars, such as could conveniently be carried in two small portmanteaux, he started off—not, however, by the obvious way inland through Glückstadt. For he went to Lübeck, and there, on the strength of his Bremen-Hamburg passport, got from the Danish Consul another, covering travel as far as Copenhagen. And thence, with no trouble whatever, he went by the westward road along the Baltic to Kiel and Flensborg. His task was now to get across the Little Belt, and find La Romana in the isle of Fünen. The main difficulty was to cross the strait, for English vessels were patrolling both the Belts, and the ferry-vessels had to wait their opportunity, and dodge the blockade when no hostile flag was in sight. But at last he got across to Assens, the little town in Fünen which faces the mainland.

Meanwhile what had been happening to the marooned Spanish army? In April La Romana had begun to be perturbed at the way in which the stream of dispatches and private letters from Spain, which had hitherto arrived regularly, had suddenly dried up. An officer who got through from Madrid with details of the accession of Ferdinand VII brought a complaint that the Home Government had got no dispatch from the expeditionary force for many weeks. Napoleon had stopped the post at both ends. This caused much alarm and evil surmises. They were more than fulfilled when on June 24th there was delivered to the Marquis a dispatch from Bayonne, announcing that the Bourbons had abdicated, that Joseph Bonaparte had been proclaimed King of Spain, that he had been acknowledged by the whole realm, and that he was to transmit the news to his army, and order the

regiments to swear allegiance to their new sovereign. The only commentary that was forthcoming on this startling news was a bundle of copies of the *Moniteur*, full of fulsome articles about the "regeneration of Spain".

A week after supervened the unobtrusive Robertson, who had naturally spent much time on his circuitous journey from Bremen to Hamburg, from Hamburg to Lübeck, and from Lübeck to the isle of Fünen. He reached Nyborg, and quartered himself in its best inn, where to his disgust he was pestered all day by a Jewish commercial traveller, who had perhaps conceived the same idea as himself, of supplying luxuries to the Spanish officers' mess. Whether he was a French spy, or only an inquisitive bagman, Brother James never quite made out; but he was a nuisance. It was with some difficulty that he got the Jew well out of sight, made his way to the back-stairs of head-quarters, and opened his petition on the cigar question to the General's major-domo. A supply of good cigars was a welcome idea, but it was with some hesitation that the important menial consented to let him see the General. Possibly a good *douceur* was administered. But finally the emissary was shown, through a room full of officers busy with papers and reports, into the sanctum of the Marquis.

This was the critical moment—and worthy of a silent prayer to the God of the good old cause. When the major-domo had left the room Robertson dropped his samples of cigars and chocolate—hitherto ostentatiously exhibited —and threw himself on La Romana's mercy. He owned that he was a priest and a British subject, not a German and a commercial traveller, and stated openly that he had a mission from Mr. Canning and Bartholomew Frere. The Marquis was at first inclined to be suspicious and silent, thinking that he might have to do with an *agent provocateur* sent by the French Government to test his loyalty. But he did not call in his staff, or order the arrest of the intruder. Thereupon Robertson gave him the private message from Frere, recalling the old conversation at Toledo in 1804, and handed to him the scrap of paper in the British

diplomatist's handwriting. No one *could* have known of this save Frere and himself, thought the Marquis, and became at once quite confidential. He owned that his position filled him with disgust, that Napoleon had plotted the ruin of Spain, that he was a loyal subject of the Bourbons, and that he was wholly unable to make out exactly what had happened at Bayonne in May, for he was cut off from all information. Thereupon Robertson told him of the details of the Bayonne treachery, of the Madrid massacre of May 2nd, and of the general insurrection of Spain. On his saying that the Asturian Deputies had arrived in London just before he left, the Marquis asked for their names, The Vizconde de Matarosa and Don Andrés de la Vega, replied the monk. "Both sound men, and known to me personally", remarked the Marquis, and after that showed no signs of hesitation.

Robertson explained that the British Government guaranteed the landing of the expeditionary force in Minorca, Cadiz, the Canaries, or South America, or anywhere that the Marquis chose, if he could collect it in a body at Nyborg, which fortunately was a harbour town. There were British ships in sight every day, and if communications were opened with them, Sir Richard Keates, the Admiral of the Baltic Squadron, had orders to co-operate at once. La Romana asked for a night to talk matters over with his staff, and bade Brother James come again in the morning with more cigars.

So next day the emissary, after shaking off his Jew fellow-lodger with some difficulty, came again to headquarters. It was evidently all right—the officers in the ante-room smiled at him and wagged their pens. The Marquis was ready to accept the whole plan, and bade the visitor get into touch at once with the Admiral, and ask him to collect transports. But there was a fearful problem to be solved before any blow could be struck: the troops must be concentrated at Nyborg, and they were at present scattered in seven different cantonments, separated from each other by broad arms of the sea. It would take several

days for him to get into touch with the outlying regiments, and then each corps would have to make its arrangements for seizing shipping and getting across to Fünen. Moreover they were all mixed up with Danish and Dutch detachments. However, he had thought of a plan which would give him an excuse for concentrating his army. He would write to Marshal Bernadotte, and inform him that he intended to hold a great review of his whole force on August 7th, at which the oath to Joseph Bonaparte should be taken in a solemn fashion. The Marshal might like to be present himself at the ceremony. Meanwhile, Robertson had better get in touch with the Baltic Fleet without delay; it should be ready to pick up the army just before the day fixed for the review.

All this exposition was interrupted in the most tiresome fashion by feigned argumentation about cigars and chocolate. For the French valet of the Marquis came into the room several times unbidden, and his master was convinced that he was a spy. Wherefore he began haggling over colonial prices, on each occasion that the unnecessary menial came in with a message.

Now Robertson had observed that every day the British frigate which was watching the Greater Belt sent out boats to patrol the narrower waters. Wherefore he walked in leisurely fashion toward a long lonely spit which ran far out into the strait, past whose side he had noted that the boats ran very close inshore. And when he was at its point he began to wag his white handkerchief as a signal, while pretending to be throwing stones for idle amusement. There was a British man-of-war's boat rowing only a few hundred yards away. Before he had succeeded in attracting its attention, he was startled by receiving a hoarse military challenge in Danish, and finding at his back a soldier who had risen from behind a bank with musket levelled at him. The spot was not unwatched, and a corporal's guard started out of the ground, and arrested Brother James. As he could not speak a word of their tongue, his explanations were useless, and when he exhibited his passport it turned

out that none of the party could read. He had certainly been caught under most suspicious circumstances, so was run into the guard-house of a Danish regiment quartered a mile or two away. It says much for the resourcefulness of Brother James that he succeeded in convincing its colonel, who spoke fluent German, that he was a harmless bagman given to pedestrian excursions, who had been caught playing "ducks and drakes" on the Baltic shore. The Danish passport from Lübeck was in perfect order, the bagman was very amusing and apologetic, and the colonel finally told him to run away, and not play silly games before concealed sentries, or he might get shot the next time.

This adventure was a nasty jar, and Brother James made up his mind that, near as the British boats might be, the shore was too well watched. He resolved that he must get back to Hamburg, where he had several threads of communication with Heligoland and Mr. Mackenzie. So he warned the Spaniards that they must wait till they had word through some other envoy that the Baltic Fleet was at hand and ready for them. This would take some days, a fortnight at least, but meanwhile the delay would give them leisure to perfect their whole plan for the "grand review", and the concentration at Nyborg. His own task was to get as soon as possible in touch with Heligoland and the Baltic Fleet. Sir Richard Keates must be ready in the Great Belt as near as possible to August 7th, with all the shipping that he could collect.

There was no further need for Adam Rohrauer to linger in Nyborg, for he had completed his contract for colonial wares with the Spanish headquarters' mess, as he assured his landlord, who was inclined to be suspicious. His Jewish fellow-lodger seemed also more inquisitive than ever, so next morning the traveller departed as quietly as he had come. He was not, therefore, an eye-witness of the *coup de main* of August 7th, and the account of it which he gives in his little book is inaccurate in several particulars. He got back to Hamburg, and sent word by several channels

to Mr. Mackenzie that the plan—unspecified, of course—would work. And Mackenzie at once sent light vessels both to London and to Gottenborg in Sweden, which was the base of the British squadron in the Baltic.

Meanwhile Brother James himself struck inland, on one of the unostentatious circular tours which he loved. When the bomb burst in Denmark on August 7th, and British secret agents were being hunted for in every direction, he had to drop his Rohrauer identity and passport. But he slipped from place to place, and was at Erfurt in October, staying in the Scottish monastery there, when Napoleon held his famous interview with Czar Alexander of Russia. We hear of him at Linz, Ratisbon, and Munich; evidently his boast that a priest could go anywhere was perfectly justified. It was not till the autumn of 1809 that he caught the right smuggler at Cuxhaven, and reported himself well and happy, first in Heligoland and then in Downing Street.

Before ending the biography of this humorous and resourceful monk, it is, of course, necessary to explain what happened at Nyborg after his departure. La Romana had lost no time in sending officers of his staff to each of the detached Spanish forces in Jutland and Zeeland, to discover how their commanders would receive the plan. All gave eager assent, save General Kindelan, the brigadier commanding in Jutland, an Irish soldier of fortune, who showed such complete indifference as to King Joseph and King Ferdinand that the officer sent to sound him dropped the topic at once, without disclosing his commission. The colonels under him were dealt with instead, and plans were laid for a simultaneous movement in each cantonment. Meanwhile Mr. Mackenzie had passed on his message to London, and Canning not only ordered the sweeping up of transport, but sent to the Baltic Don Rafael Lobo, an Asturian deputy, who was landed on the isle of Langeland on August 4th, and confirmed to the Spanish regiment there garrisoned all the news that Robertson had brought about the condition of affairs in the Peninsula.

An unfortunate chance intervened to prevent the complete success of the plot. A dispatch came from Joseph Bonaparte to the effect that there had been delay, as he understood, in the taking of the oath in his name by the Expeditionary Force. Therefore each corps was to parade at its headquarters on July 30th or July 31st, and go through the ceremony with proper military pomp. Now, the senior officers everywhere, by this time, were making their preparations for evasion, but the rank and file knew nothing definite about the plan, though some had their suspicions. La Romana sent word round that the ceremony had better be gone through—oaths sworn under duress are not morally binding. So most of the regiments formally took the oath in a more or less farcical way. In some cases the men substituted the word "Ferdinand" for the word "Joseph", and the officers took no notice of this somewhat startling verbal alteration.

But the two regiments quartered in Zeeland—Guadalajara and Asturias—when paraded on July 31st, and told to swear to the name of King Joseph, burst into mutiny, drove off the officers who tried to keep them quiet, shot the aide-de-camp of the French General Fririon, who was presiding at the ceremony, and threatened to march on Copenhagen. Next day they were surrounded by Danish troops in great force, and compelled to lay down their arms. Ringleaders were executed, and the mass dispersed in small parties to prison camps. Incidentally, it may be remarked, these zealous but misguided loyalists were incorporated by force in a Spanish Legion which Napoleon used in the Russian War of 1812. It was destroyed at Krasnoi during the Moscow retreat, but a remnant who had been captured by the Russians were sent round by sea to Cadiz by the Czar.

The result of this mutiny at Roeskilde was to reveal to Bernadotte the true mentality of his Spanish contingent, and he announced to La Romana that he was about to visit the Danish isles on a mission of inquiry, bringing

with him French and Dutch troops. There would be a new dislocation of the whole of the army of the Baltic. The arrival of the Marshal in a suspicious frame of mind, and with troops at his back, would have wrecked the whole plan. Hence a few days before the British Baltic Fleet was due to appear La Romana gave his signal for action. On August 7th all the troops in Fünen concentrated at Nyborg. The Danes were taken by surprise, and no one resisted, save an obstinate naval officer commanding a brig in the harbour. A British frigate and five gunboats battered his vessel to pieces. Next day the detachment in Jutland carried out their part in the arrangement: the infantry regiment of Zamora and the cavalry regiments Rey and Infante seized the towns of Fredericia and Aarhus, got fishing-boats and other small craft, and ferried themselves across the Lesser Belt into Fünen; the regiment Algarve was less lucky—General Kindelan had fled from his quarters, when he saw what was going on, to the nearest French cantonment. A brigade of Dutch Hussars, which he brought up, intercepted Algarve outside Fredericia, and fell upon it. The officer who was leading the regiment—a Major Costa—blew out his brains when he saw that the game was up, and the rest surrendered.

The regiment in Langeland had disarmed the Danish garrison in that isolated isle without difficulty; and of the unfortunate mutineers in Zeeland a party of about 150 succeeded in breaking prison, seizing fishing-boats, and crossing to Fünen.

La Romana had thus collected some 9,000 men out of the 14,000 who had been under his command. He shipped them over to Langeland, which was perfectly safe, as broad sea separated it from the larger isles. Here Admiral Saumarez arrived on August 10th with the fleet and a miscellaneous assortment of transports. The whole force embarked at leisure, was taken to Gottenborg in friendly Sweden, and thence to the Thames. La Romana asked that they might be landed on the north-west of Spain, and at Santander they came ashore on their own soil, in time to take part

in Blake's unlucky campaign of Espinosa. The rest of their history is that of the much-tried Army of Galicia, which La Romana commanded in 1809 and Del Parque in 1810. The Marquis himself, as everyone knows, died within the lines of Torres Vedras, almost in the presence of Wellington, who had a great esteem for him, and considered him the safest of the Spanish generals.

Meanwhile Mr. Robertson was wandering up and down Germany for many a month, after his Spanish friends had got home. But he was back in London by the autumn of 1809. As an example of his occasional freaks of humour it may be mentioned that, being in Bavaria in August, he got from a colleague in the Secret Service Wellington's bulletin of Talavera. Finding that the name and story of this battle were entirely unknown in Germany, he induced a friend who had a printing-press to strike off a number of copies of a translation of the document, and strewed them all round Munich. After which he very wisely removed to another city of refuge outside the borders of Bavaria.

After this came three uneventful years—satisfactory ones in that the Foreign Office had bestowed a good-service pension on its successful emissary—unsatisfactory as wanting in "the joy of eventful living". But in 1813 Brother James went on his travels again. Wellington had written home to the Foreign Office that accurate information as to the mentality of Germany after the Moscow Retreat would be most valuable, and that he knew no one like Mr. Robertson for collecting news and escaping notice. The hint was taken, and the cheerful little monk pervaded South Germany all through the year of the War of Liberation, sending from time to time valuable précis of the trend of public opinion.

When the wars were over, he returned to his old monastery at Ratisbon, having apparently exhausted his craving for movement and adventure. And there he died in 1820, after having founded the first Bavarian Society for the help of the Deaf and Dumb, to which he subscribed

himself the very handsome sum of 1,000 thalers, and of which he remained the patron till the day of his death. Presumably his own gift of cheerful volubility had given him a special pity for those who could neither talk nor listen to others talking.

VIII

TALES OF SECRET SERVICE (III)

Baron Kolli and the Prisoner of Valençay

IF I only knew the Baron by his little book, published in 1823 at Paris, I should have been inclined to think that he had invented himself and his adventures. But there is no doubt that there was such a person—one runs upon him unexpectedly in quite serious state papers, and in contemporary memoirs of perfect authenticity. All the absurdities of his style, and his interminable testimonials to his own courage, magnanimity, disinterestedness, loyalty, and adroitness, must not drive us into a disbelief in his existence.

Who was he? The editors of the *Dictionnaire Universelle de Biographie* cannot inform us of his age, birthplace, or nationality. He himself always signs majestically Kolli—no Christian name is discoverable. The editors of the *Dictionnaire* can only call him "le Baron Kolli"—but what sort of a baron was he? Or "le Colonel Kolli"—but in what army had he commanded a regiment? The only definite statement about his origin which I have discovered is that he is said to have been a Piedmontese. But no Italian could have a name beginning with K. He himself gives us no help in all his diffuse paragraphs. He professes intense veneration for St-Louis and the sacred lilies of France, but never claims to be a Frenchman. His enthusiasm is equally great for Catholic Spain—the Inquisition included—and Ferdinand *rey neto*. He has even reverence to spare for George III of England, whose sentiments he considered "touching and sublime", and whose prudence and energy had made a reign of sixty years illustrious. There is, perhaps, some slight help to be got from the fact

that he certainly was not conversant with the Spanish tongue; he got it up in twenty-four lessons, he tells us, so as to be able to converse currently with princes and others. On the other hand, he knew German very well, and his English was fluent. This leads me to the hypothesis that he may have been an Irish Colley—one of those innumerable scions of exiled Jacobite adventurers who pervaded every Catholic country in Europe in the XVIIIth century, and appear spasmodically in Austrian, Neapolitan, Spanish, and French army lists. The K at the front of his name suggests an Austrian domicile. And certainly his book betrays a Hibernian style by its turgid magniloquence. He prefers to call the Napoleonic eagle "the unholy vulture", or a police inspector "the ferocious head of a band of *Sbirri*". Perhaps it may suffice to give an idea of his diction if we transcribe his notes on his first night spent in prison under the keep of Vincennes.

"The aspect of my cell inspired me with a sudden horror. I hoped that a speedy death would save me from the long agonies which so many martyrs, faithful to their king, had been condemned to endure in this abyss. But when I questioned my soul, I felt my melancholy somewhat alleviated by the thought that I was one of them; that I was breathing the air which had barely sufficed to keep them alive. I compared my lot with that of those faithful ones, and appropriating to myself some portion of the veneration which they inspired, I found that even Misfortune has its charms when virtue is her companion. The dull noises which occasionally echoed along these sepulchral vaults brought me some suggestion of the calm of the grave, and freed me from the worries of the everyday world. And my eyes, peering into the blank darkness, seemed to discern a blood-flecked phantom, in whose half-seen visage majesty and kindliness were combined. Yes—it was the spirit of the murdered Duc d'Enghien, who seemed to halt before me, to lift his hand from under his sable cloak, and, pointing to heaven, to murmur, 'Friend! those who die here live for eternity'."

It is, however, worth while to disentangle from this bombast a genuine and a very curious story, which gives us interesting light upon the methods of the French police under the direction of Fouché, and raises some puzzling problems as to the intentions of Napoleon with regard to Ferdinand VII, the captive of Valençay.

Kolli, whoever he was, slipped across from Holland to Flushing while the British expedition to Walcheren still lay on the Scheldt, in November 1809. According to his own narrative he had the audacity to board a small Dutch smuggling lugger, and—though accompanied by only one friend—to bluff the smuggler into risking his craft, by running out to sea into Sir Richard Strachan's blockading squadron. In December he reached London, and broached his scheme to Lord Wellesley, who had succeeded Canning at the Foreign Office a few weeks before.

The idea was that it might be possible to rescue King Ferdinand from his enforced leisure at Valençay, where (under the nominal care of Talleyrand) he was kept in a somewhat loose captivity, surrounded by a small court of his friends and retainers, and without a military guard. Napoleon's reasons for taking so little precaution with his captive were twofold. The first was that Valençay was so deep in the heart of France that an attempt to escape from it was considered impracticable. The second, and not the less cogent, was that he had taken his estimate of the captive King at Bayonne, and judged him so sluggish, destitute of initiative, and cowed in spirit, that he would refuse to take any personal risk if the chance of a rescue was offered him. The event seemed to justify this view; but (as we shall see) the question arises whether Ferdinand was or was not aware that, when the offer came, it was not from a real friend, but from an impostor, who had got possession of the credentials of the true emissary and was being utilized by Fouché. This psychological problem has served as the main thesis of a very clever novel—*The King's Revoke*—by Mrs. Woods, in which the decision is given against Ferdinand, and he is made from mere

cowardice to betray the would-be saviour, under the impression that the latter was a genuine but rash votary of legitimism. Incidentally this novel gives a very amusing picture of the personage "Count d'Haggerty" who represents Kolli, and makes him sufficiently absurd, though not precisely on the lines displayed in the little book in which the Baron tells his story.

Whether the escape of Ferdinand would, or would not, have been profitable to the cause of Spain and of England may be considered a doubtful point. The English Government was profoundly disgusted with the way in which the Supreme Junta at Seville was mismanaging the war. And the appearance of the King would certainly take power out of the hands of that quarrelsome, suspicious, and perverse body. On the other hand, Ferdinand was almost an unknown quantity at the time, and what little was known of him tended to show that he was obstinate, secretive, and false. But he must, unless he were infra- or superhuman, be the bitter enemy of Napoleon, after what had happened to him at Bayonne. And it was quite true that a rancorous hatred of his captor was his main inspiring thought all through the years of his imprisonment, though he tried to veil it by writing occasional letters of fulsome compliment to the Emperor, when he had some small boon to crave. There was no chance that he could come to an agreement with Napoleon; for the latter had made all compromises impossible, by setting up his brother Joseph as King of Spain. Therefore it was judged in London that it would be profitable, rather than the reverse, if Ferdinand were released and took up the reins of power. His name still roused frantic loyalty in every patriotic Spanish breast, and he might count on being obeyed as the Junta never could be.

On the whole the Foreign Office was prepared to give Baron Kolli a chance—his self-confidence was infectious, his plan apparently feasible, and his demands moderate. He only asked to be landed on the Breton coast, to be given a sum of £10,000 to work his scheme, and to be put

in touch with the remnants of the old Royalist party who still lurked in France, professing submission to Napoleon but ready to give secret aid against him. The Baron changed the order on the Treasury for £10,000 into a corresponding value of unset diamonds, holding that it would be impossible to display English gold or bank-notes in France, while precious stones could be sold or pledged easily at Paris to jewellers or financiers, of whom the names of several were given him. All the cash that he took was a few score Napoleons for his initial expenses.

But his papers were more important in a well-policed country like France during the regime of Fouché. Not only passports but all sorts of confirmatory documents would be necessary for the adventure. Kolli had made for him all sorts of way-bills, orders, and correspondence on official paper; for his daring alias was to be that of a colonel of *gendarmerie* on a secret mission to report on anti-smuggling precautions. He had a complete and correct uniform made for him, a forged commission from Paris, and a schedule of places to be visited, and of notes upon the changes recommendable in each of them. This may appear a dangerous method for imposing on local police and officials; but that it was not so mad as it looked may be gathered from the record of other impostors of a less political caste, such as Pontis de St-Hélène, who passed himself off as a lieutenant-colonel, and the daring swindler Collot, who went through half a dozen departments as an *inspecteur aux revues*, turned out the depots of every garrison town, and got free dinners and free quarters from prefects and colonels. Most of all is the hypnotism caused by a fine uniform displayed in the case of General Malet. With self-confidence and a studied air of authority officials of minor rank could nearly always be bluffed into taking a stranger in big epaulettes for what he claimed to be.

Kolli's plan was to get himself landed by night on the Breton coast, to show himself in official capacity in several towns, and then to travel quite openly to Paris, where he would shed his uniform, only to resume it on the day

on which he intended to carry off Ferdinand from Valençay by another piece of bluffing. The preparation of the *coup de main* both in Paris and round Valençay would have to be carried out in mufti, of an unostentatious sort. But the actual removal of the captive King was to be executed by someone who looked like an important and peremptory officer, whose commands would not be disputed by underlings.

It was necessary to recruit a limited number of devoted adherents of the Bourbons, who would appear as Kolli's official satellites, and to secure a carefully guarded place of embarkation for the King if he should succeed in escaping. The Baron took with him only one companion, a young *émigré*, whom he only calls Albert de St-B——, who acted as his confidential secretary. But he had a list of approved old Royalists—some in Brittany who had been *chouans* in the days of the Republic, others in Paris who were already in secret communication with the British Foreign Office. The place on the coast which had been selected as the point of escape was near Sarzeau on the Bay of Morbihan, in sight of which a British vessel, small or great, was always to be hovering, on the watch for a bonfire which would announce the arrival of Ferdinand and his escort. For this signalling an old-established *chouan* friend had been told off.

There remained the method to be adopted for getting into communication with the captive King, and convincing him that the envoy was a real agent of the British Government. The first half of this task was to be conducted through Ferdinand's Master of the Horse, Amezaga, who was in touch with some Paris bankers, from whom he had been borrowing money for the King, without the knowledge of the French Government as far as he could ascertain. There was also a château not many miles from Valençay, whose owner was prepared to put up a stranger and a carriage and to ask no questions. As to credentials for Ferdinand, Lord Wellesley gave Kolli a document impossible to forge, the original letter, with the signature of the late King

Carlos III, by which that monarch had announced to George III in 1802 the marriage of Ferdinand himself to his short-lived first wife, Maria Antonia of Naples. This was obviously a thing that could only have come out of the archives of the British Foreign Office. To back it up there were two short letters from George III to Ferdinand—one in Latin, the other in French—countersigned by Lord Wellesley, in which he was told to trust the *"vir idoneus"* who was the bearer of the three papers. These were sewn up in the Baron's underclothing, while his diamonds were packed in a belt worn next his skin.

On February 28, 1810, Kolli and his secretary, Albert de St-B——, sailed from Plymouth on a brig which joined the squadron under Sir George Cockburn which was blockading Brest. After a conference with the Admiral and with a Breton Royalist, who came off secretly in a boat, a certain Baron de Ferriet, he and Albert were put on shore in a lonely salt-marsh in the Bay of Morbihan. Both the Admiral and de Ferriet had expressed doubts as to the practicability of the landing, but it came off successfully on the rainy evening of March 9th.

Kolli was dressed in his uniform of a colonel of *gendarmerie*—his companion was to pass as his clerk and wore mufti. They walked several miles in the dusk, through muddy tracks along the shore, till both were tired out; the rain continued, and a cold wind was sweeping the marshes. At length the young secretary declared that he was on the verge of collapse, sat down in the slime, and refused to move. After giving him in vain a draught from his flask and a series of stinging reproofs, Kolli in a rage thrust some money upon him, and told him that he would probably get arrested as a spy, but that, if he were not, he was to report to a certain address in Paris.

Walking on several miles farther, the Baron reached his destined goal, the village of Muzillac, where he knocked up the *maire*, who was in bed, and announced himself as a colonel of *gendarmerie* who had lost his way, his horse, and his secretary also, in the marshes. He insisted that

he had no time to waste, flourished his papers before the *maire*, and finally requisitioned a horse and a guide. In spite of remembrances as to the hour and the weather, Kolli persisted in being served, and, after he had dried himself for an hour before the fire, found a horse and a guide ready for him. Pushing on all through the early morning hours, he reached Vannes, the chief town of the department, before midday. There he very boldly went to the post-master, and ordered a post-chaise to be ready in a few hours, when he should have had time to get a little rest and food. He showed his false commission from Paris, was treated with deference, and found all ready for him at the appointed moment. Just as he was about to mount his conveyance he was surprised, and rather vexed, to see Albert de St-B—— trail into the post-office in a miserable state of exhaustion. He had rather hoped that he had lost him for good in the marshes. However, he picked the young man up, and took him on for several stages. But finding him absolutely torpid and useless, he dropped him again at the first large town that they passed (perhaps Angers?), with orders to follow to Paris when he should have recovered.

Kolli's rather eccentric itinerary—Vannes, Angers, Tours, and the neighbourhood of Valençay—passed unsuspected by post-masters, who only saw a *colonel de gendarmerie* in a furious hurry and a bad temper. He made no attempt to enter the palace where the King lay captive, but observed from the road the exits of the park and the general lie of the château. He already knew of the exact locality in the neighbourhood where the friendly house was situated, to which he was to take the King after the first moment of his evasion.

On March 14th the Baron reached Paris, via Orleans, and, after shedding his very conspicuous uniform at the house of a trusty Royalist, went to one of the business firms to which he had been given a recommendation, and pledged there part of his stock of diamonds for 30,000 francs of French paper-money. The rest of his jewellery

he deposited at another address in sure hands. He then took for a month a small house belonging to a market-gardener in the environs of Vincennes, with a back entrance from the forest. Here he made his headquarters from March 14th to March 23rd; and here he was rejoined on the 16th by Albert de St-B——, coming in a little late from Angers.

Kolli went daily into Paris, and communicated there with the persons whose names had been given to him in London, and who were warranted to him as Royalists of approved fidelity. He did not require more than six or eight helpers, and of these the majority would be exposed to little risk, as all that each of them was asked to do was to have two good saddle-horses ready on a fixed night, apparently March 25th or 26th, at certain given spots—St-Christophe, near Tours—Le Mans—Vannes. But one pair were to pick up, at the secret friendly house near Valençay, a large berline with shuttered windows, which they were to drive via Tours and Paimbœuf towards the coast of La Vendée. There would be no one inside the carriage, which was to be used merely to attract the attention of local authorities, and it was to be abandoned at some convenient place, after it had gone on for a night and a morning. By that time the Baron thought that pursuit would be in progress, and his friends had better disappear off the road and vanish.

Now, among the very few persons whom the Baron had recruited as helpers—apparently he was to be one of the men who were to be at a given spot with two saddle-horses on the night of March 26th—was a certain ex-Vendéan officer named Richard, who had served in the band of the Prince de Talmont, had been wounded more than once, and enjoyed a reputation for fearlessness among his old companions. No one doubted his absolute loyalty. Kolli drilled him well in his itinerary, but gave him no precise indications of the character of the plan in which he was to take a part. Indeed, he seems to have explained the whole scheme to nobody but Albert St-B——, and the

two persons who were to drive the conspicuous berline from near Valençay towards Paimbœuf.

Unfortunately for the Baron he had talked in very high and lofty tones of the importance of his plan to this Richard, using (as he confesses) very desperate language about the martyrdom of Louis XVI, the grudge which all good Royalists owed against Bonaparte—for the fusillades in Brittany, and the execution of Georges Cadoudal, etc. He remembered afterwards that his interlocutor seemed more startled than inspired to zeal. "Mes interpellations étonnaient Richard sans échauffer son âme." And, as luck would have it, the old Vendéan conceived the idea that Kolli (like Cadoudal of old) was plotting to assassinate the Emperor, and that the relays of horses were intended to facilitate his escape to the Breton coast after the murder.

The notion of being involved in an assassination plot, with the results that had happened to Cadoudal's accomplices, did not please Richard. He had been seen several times in the Baron's company, and had slept at his house in Vincennes. Therefore he considered himself a marked man, whether the plot should fail or succeed. And after some days of hesitation between loyalty, silence, or betrayal, he went to the Ministry of Police, and denounced Kolli as being engaged in a plot against the life of the Emperor. He was taken before the redoubtable Fouché himself, warned of his danger, and ordered to play the part of Judas. That is, he was to rejoin Kolli at his cottage in Vincennes, and point him out to a squad of police under the celebrated Inspector Pâques, who were to arrest them simultaneously.

And so matters fell out. On the morning of March 24th the Baron was getting his horse ready—he was to start for Valençay that same day—when Richard came to him to receive his last instructions and 2,700 francs for his expenses. As they talked in the stable-yard there was a knocking at both the back and front of the house, and when Richard opened the back door eleven policemen

rushed in and laid hands upon them both. The warrant was for "treasonable communication with the enemies of the state"—a sufficiently vague indictment. While the Baron and Richard were kept in custody in the yard Pâques searched the cottage, and packed up all the clothes, papers, and arms which he found therein.

When he had bundled them all together the Inspector formally asked Kolli who he might claim to be. The answer was: "I am the envoy of the British Government sent to endeavour to free His Majesty the King of Spain from his prison at Valençay." This seemed to astonish the hearers; Pâques showed surprise. Richard cried (with a tone of despair, as it seemed to the Baron): "What! Then that was all that he wanted." The Inspector then caused the Baron to be searched, and found on him the three letters given him by Lord Wellesley, 15,000 francs in bank-notes, the false commission to him as a *colonel de gendarmerie*, and several other papers, as well as a schedule of his diamonds. The last-named document did not give any indication of where the stones had been deposited. The prisoners were packed with four police into a large closed carriage, and left for Paris under escort of a piquet of *gendarmes*.

While the Baron and Richard were detained in cells at the Ministry of Police, Fouché's right-hand man, the Under-Secretary Desmarest, hastily ran through the papers which had been found upon the prisoner and in his house. It was obvious that the idea of an assassination plot had been a mistake. But to give out that one more attempt on the Emperor's life had been hatched in "perfidious Albion" might be fine propaganda, and excellent pabulum for the readers of the *Moniteur*. It might have a good effect to cause the Baron to be shot off-hand, on the information given by Richard, who could be stated to know the whole design. On the other hand, there were reasons for taking another course. If Kolli could be sufficiently terrified, he might not only be induced to give the address where the rest of his diamonds were stored

away, but also (what was much more important) to disclose the names of the secret agents of Great Britain in Paris, and those of the Royalists to whom he had been accredited by Lord Wellesley. It would also be interesting to discover whether the prisoner of Valençay had been aware of the plan, and how far he would have fallen in with it. If the whole matter had come under Ferdinand's knowledge, would he have consented to fly? And supposing that it were discovered that he had been implicated in the design, what new measures would have to be taken with regard to his custody?

Hence came a series of cross-examinations of the Baron, with the object of testing his courage and his mentality, and of trying to worm out of him useful information by "third degree" methods, if he should prove silent and obstinate at first. Kolli's accounts of his long interviews with Desmarest, and afterwards with Fouché himself, form very interesting reading, even when we have discounted his obvious tendency to "take the stage" and allot himself the heroic rôle. The details are too long to be given, but the gist of them can be stated in a few lines. The Baron was warned, as a preliminary, that nothing could be easier than to treat him as the organizer of an assassination plot, and that the Emperor would certainly credit such a theory. This possibility being laid down as the base of negotiations, Kolli was told that the whole of his doings since his landing were known to the police, and that he had been betrayed on all sides. It was hinted to him that de Ferriet, whom he had met on Sir George Cockburn's flagship, had notified his landing, and that not only Richard, but Albert de St-B—— and others of his acquaintance had denounced him. This was for the most part untrue—the object was to inspire the Baron with rage and contempt against his coadjutors at large, and to get him to make incautious remarks about them. Kolli, according to himself, persevered in a stoic line of reply; he had failed, he was at the mercy of the enemy, he would give no names, his plan must be known through the papers found on him, and he was

prepared to take the consequences. The only thing, he says, which Desmarest got out of him was an incautious answer which led to the discovery of the bank at which his stock of diamonds had been deposited.

Next night the Baron was brought before Fouché himself, who affected an ironical and bantering style of interrogatory, not destitute of a certain feigned compassion. "Why should a man of courage and resource set himself to an impossible task, with a hopeless and rotten set of confederates? To begin with, what indication was there that Ferdinand would have the pluck to lend himself to the plan?" Kolli, seeing that the Duke was fishing for information as to the extent of his relation with Valençay, replied that the young King was a Bourbon, had been through the tragedy of Bayonne, and must surely have some self-respect and some resentment in his heart. "You don't know him", was the reply; "if you got to him, with King George's letters and your precious plan, he would refuse to budge. You have come on a fool's errand, one more victim of the British Foreign Office, which cares not a farthing for what becomes of its wretched tools." And so Kolli was relegated to the *donjon* of Vincennes, warned that he would be sent for once more for a final interview, on which his fate would depend.

A few days later the Baron was taken not to the Ministry of Police but to Fouché's mansion, where he found not the Duke himself but his factotum Desmarest. The Under-Secretary dictated his ultimatum. He and his chief had no particular desire to get their prisoner shot, but the Emperor had been asking why there was so much delay in sending him before a military court. However, they could pacify their master if the Baron would name the British agents in Paris to whom he had been accredited, and explain his method of communicating with Valençay. Moreover, they were so convinced that Ferdinand would refuse to meddle with the plot, that they could promise that the Baron should be given back his English letters, conveyed to Valençay, and allowed to show his credentials

to the Spanish prince. He would certainly receive a rebuff, and be told to go back to England. And this should be permitted. Moreover, he would find his deposit of diamonds safe at his bank, and would be allowed to take it off with him to London.

The fact, of course, was that Fouché was by no means certain that Ferdinand would refuse the offer, when it was presented to him by a bearer with such credentials. But what the Emperor would have done if Kolli had stooped to this service, and the King had consented to fly, we shall never know. The Baron professes to believe that Fouché might have staged a scene of attempted escape, which would have ended with pistol-shots and the removal of an inconvenient and legitimate claimant to the Spanish crown. More probably the finale would have been the consignment of Ferdinand to close confinement in a fortress; his death would have been taken all round Europe as a deliberate political murder.

Kolli naturally foamed with rage at the proposal made to him of acting as an *agent provocateur* and getting off with his liberty and his diamonds. "Infamous! Take me back to Vincennes: I care nothing for my life, it would be insupportable if I stooped to this treason." "Well", replied Desmarest, "if *you* do not go to Valençay someone else will—someone who is not such a proud fool as you are. Meanwhile, back you go to your dungeon."

And so it befell. Kolli was reconducted to the Castle of Vincennes, which he was not destined to leave for nearly four years. And someone did go to Valençay, under the Baron's name and furnished with his British credentials, with orders to betray Ferdinand, if possible, into an open attempt to escape. The traitor was the same Richard who had already ruined the Baron; he had been terrified with threats of lifelong prison unless he consented to this further infamy, and promised a round sum of money if he should succeed.

Fouché's letter to Major Berthémy, the Staff officer in residence at Valençay, chances to have been preserved.

It ordered him to facilitate the entrance into the palace of the bearer of the dispatch, "le sieur Albert", who must be given some colourable pretext for seeing the Spanish Prince, e.g. he might pretend to be a dealer in works of art or some other sort of tradesman. He must deliver the credentials taken from Baron Kolli, and explain to the Prince that he has a sure method for escape prepared, by English vessels off the Norman coast. If the Prince objects that he is too well watched to be able to slip out of sight, it should be proposed to him that he should be carried off by his partisans, who have a false ministerial order which will deceive the Governor. Should the Prince accept either of these alternatives, "le sieur Albert" will have three confidential men given him, and when they are clear of Valençay the Prince will be taken straight to Vincennes and lodged there. Should the Prince refuse both alternatives, "le sieur Albert" will at least try to get him to answer the letter of George III, which will have been confided to him by this agent.

The wretched traitor Richard actually carried out this disgusting intrigue. It may be said, in passing, that he was called "Albert" in the document in order to implicate the unfortunate Albert de St-B——, Kolli's incapable secretary. But the whole ingenious scheme came to complete wreck on a matter of psychology, which provides some interesting puzzles.

When Richard was duly shuffled into the palace with a collection of objects in ivory—it was known that the King's uncle Don Antonio was interested in them and worked himself at a lathe in his hours of enforced leisure—he was conducted into a long gallery and laid out his little show. After some trifling talk with the old Prince, whom at first, such was his stupidity, he mistook for his nephew, the King, Richard began to broach his scheme in mysterious language, and to express a desire to see Ferdinand himself, and to show him some documents. Don Antonio went out and did not return. After an unconscionable length of waiting Richard was joined by Major Berthémy, who told

him that the game was up. He had just received from King Ferdinand the following hastily written note:

> An unknown person has got in here in disguise, and has proposed to Señor Amezaga, my Master of the Horse and Steward, to carry me off from Valençay; he tried to have some papers which he had brought conveyed to my hands. I write immediately to give information of the matter, and take this opportunity of showing anew my inviolable good faith toward the Emperor Napoleon, and the horror that I feel at this infernal project, whose author (I hope) may be chastised according to his deserts.

There was nothing more to be done, as Berthémy observed to Richard, who made some feeble suggestions as to sending in the English letters to the King. So Richard returned to Paris, to receive 12,000 francs and an order to reside in the provinces. And Berthémy duly reported to Fouché that he had captured one Baron Kolli, a spy. The *Moniteur* proceeded to print an account of Baron Kolli's fruitless visit to Valençay, and to point out the extreme content of King Ferdinand with the quiet life which he was spending, and his gratitude and affection for the Emperor, so amply proved by his letter, which was given at length.

The language of the letter was certainly disgusting to every Spanish or English reader to whom it penetrated. But was it, as on the face it might appear, a hasty and immediate rejection of an offer that the King believed to be genuine, which would mean the probable death of the bearer? Or had Ferdinand "smelt a rat", suspected a plot of Fouché's, and foiled it by expression of hypocritical horror and surprise?

On the whole there is much to be said in favour of the latter hypothesis. Ferdinand's life had been spent in the midst of plots, and he suspected everything and everybody. It is almost certain that he had, through Amezaga, some previous warning of Kolli's scheme, and that he did not get his first notion of it from Richard's visit. The mention of Amezaga in his letter instead of Don Antonio, seems to prove this. The real Kolli was not to have come to

Valençay in this particular fashion. Moreover, we have in the Baron's little book an account of an interview which he had, long years after, with Berthémy, who in 1814 had become a colonel in the service of the King of Naples. This officer told him that he had been disgusted with Fouché's orders, and had done as little as he could to favour Richard's plan; that his bearing towards the agent had been such as muct have attracted the notice of the King's Spanish servants and courtiers, who smelt treachery everywhere. Moreover, Richard had played his part badly, had frightened Don Antonio by his "verbiage sans suite et trouble extraordinaire," and was in such a state of mixed terror and excitement that he would have roused suspicion in the most guileless breast. The Princes had resolved that he was not the real Kolli, and played for safety by denouncing a man whom they believed (and rightly) to be only a police spy.

Richard's failure did not bring about Kolli's execution. When the latter learned in his dungeon, many weeks after, of his supposed visit to Valençay, he wondered why he had been spared. Apparently it was because Napoleon was satisfied with the moral effect of Ferdinand's hypocritical declaration, and was content to leave the Baron visible as an example of a rash and maladroit plotter who had tried an impossible adventure. But he spent the long months from April 1810 to February 1814 in a dungeon in the keep of Vincennes, kept *au secret* and restricted to an allowance of ten sous per diem over and above the prison ration of an ordinary criminal. His only excitement for the first year was that his neighbours in the cell above him, the two brothers Polignac, kept up a correspondence with him by means of a string let down at night with a little bag at the end, in which letters were placed. They were less well guarded than himself, and had corrupted their jailer, who once or twice let them come down to the cell below them, while all the world was asleep. When the Polignacs were removed, Kolli got as neighbour above a worthy *abbé*, to whom the secret of the string and bag

had been confided, and received pious exhortations instead of the scraps of newspaper with which his previous friends had been wont to regale him.

In 1811 the Baron discovered a weak stone in a dark corner of his cell, and set to work (after the fashion of Trenck fifty years before) to dig it out and work towards the exterior of the wall. Six months of tedious labour ended in his penetrating to the open air. He dropped just before dawn into the ditch, by means of a rope contrived from his bed-clothes, and tried to escape, by mingling with a party of masons who came in every day to work on a new building. He got as far as the outermost gate of all, carrying a hod, and was there detected by a workman, who pointed him out to the porter as not belonging to the gang. After this the Governor moved him up to the topmost row of cells in the keep, some 120 feet from the ground. The only solace to his misery was that he was level with the platform of the keep, where certain prisoners were allowed to take exercise, and contrived to get into communication with several of them, notably with the Spanish general Charles O'Donnell and other officers taken at the capitulation of Valencia in January 1812.

But for this distraction Kolli thinks that he would have died of inanition; his digestion had gone out of order, he got rheumatism and had fevers in the winters, and the years passed by without incident. Only vague news of the Moscow Retreat and the Leipzig disaster reached the denizens of the keep. It was a surprise, therefore, when at the end of February 1814 the whole of the prisoners in Vincennes, some forty of them—Vendéans, Spaniards, Germans, four survivors of Malet's conspiracy, two Russians, and a stray English diplomat—were packed into closed carriages and sent off to Saumur on the Loire. The Allies were in Champagne, and Napoleon was fighting his last furious campaign to cover Paris. On March 31st the capital city fell; on April 13th Napoleon had ratified the Act of Fontainebleau and started on his way to Elba. On April 16th the prisoners at Saumur

were turned loose on a world very unfamiliar to most of them.

The Baron had much pressing business before him: to find his wife and children, whom he had not seen for five years; to clear his reputation with his old employers, the British Government; to explain to King Ferdinand the risks that he had taken for him; and to get back the packet of diamonds which he had stowed away in the Paris bank, or if not the stones themselves, then their estimated value in cash. His efforts were moderately successful. The British Government accepted his explanation, and made no inquiry as to what had become of the diamonds. With the aid of the Spanish Ambassador in Paris, Pizarro, he got from the new Royalist government permission to hunt over the Valençay documents in the Ministry of Police, and found Fouché's orders to Major Berthémy, and Berthémy's official and confidential reports to Fouché. These established his case, and when they were sent to Madrid, King Ferdinand showed a gratitude rather greater than one would have expected from a personage of such a self-centred and callous disposition. He created Kolli a Knight of the Order of Carlos III, and gave him a warrant on the governmental tobacco monopoly of Havannah for no less a sum than 100,000 dollars, to be spread over several years. In Paris he was less fortunate. When he applied to the ministers of Louis XVIII for the restitution of the residue of his £10,000 of diamonds, which Fouché's police had seized, as well as of his personal effects, he got an order for 15,000 francs to cover his minor claims, but a dilatory explanation as to the difficulty of identifying the sum produced by his diamonds in 1810, which had been absorbed into the general funds of the state. Then came the Hundred Days, during which the Baron took arms under the Duchesse d'Angoulême in the futile attempt to hold the South loyal to Louis XVIII. He was taken prisoner by General Clausel, and only released after Waterloo. Resuming his campaign for the value of his diamonds against the ministers of the Second Restoration, he finally received the answer that

the sum which he claimed was British money, and that as Great Britain had been at war with France in 1810 it was a legitimate prize of war. The Duc Decazes would not stir from this decision.

However, the Spanish pension remained, and for a year or two the Baron was moderately solvent. Alas! he gave his power of attorney to an American banker at Havannah to cash his grant, and Mr. Elihu Keane drew a great part of it, and then went bankrupt and levanted! The Spanish Revolutionary Government of 1820 abolished all Royal grants made since 1814, and so the rest of Ferdinand's liberality disappeared. To earn some useful *louis d'or* the Baron wrote his little book of adventure in 1821. I have seldom read one whose literary style is more detestable, but a great part of the story is undoubtedly true.

IX

TALES OF SECRET SERVICE (IV)

Major Colquhoun Grant's Tour in France

I WAS sorting through the papers of Sir George Scovell, Wellington's cypher-secretary during a great part of the Peninsular War, when I came on two documents of extraordinary interest. Scovell, I must explain, was an expert in the unravelling of all sorts of cyphers, and had been attached to the Intelligence branch of the Quarter-master-General's department, because the French commanders during the latter part of the war sent all their important dispatches in cypher. The country between the headquarters of each of their armies was so infested by guerrilla bands that when there was need to communicate with a colleague, or with Madrid, the choice lay between sending an aide-de-camp with a considerable escort or a spy in disguise. There were French officers who could pass as native wayfarers, but not many; on the other hand, the supply of Spanish adventurers who were prepared to carry a secret message for a round sum of dollars was considerable. Some of them were true *Afrancesados*, who had thrown in their lot with the French cause, and worked honestly for their party; others were merely greedy, unscrupulous, and unpatriotic. Their risk was great, for the guerrillero chiefs—Julian Sanchez, on the borders of Castile and Leon, was the most wily and bold of them—were singularly able detectives, and had an uncanny power of discovering that a muleteer, a priest, or a pedlar, found on the road far from his home, was a French messenger and not a simple traveller. And Julian and some of his rivals were strong enough not merely to stop individuals, but sometimes to surprise and capture

an officer with his whole escort of twenty or thirty *chasseurs à cheval* or hussars. Not only from patriotic reasons, but because Wellington paid a round sum down for every French dispatch brought him, all the captured documents found their way to the British headquarters, and when, as usual, they were in cypher, they were passed over to Major Scovell. They ranged from considerable documents covering eight or ten folio pages—evidently entrusted to an aide-de-camp with an escort—down to scraps of the smallest size, written on thin paper so as to go into some secret place of concealment on the bearer's person. Some of them look as if they had been sewn up in a cloth button, or rolled under the leather of a whip-handle, or folded between the soles of a boot. Probably every one of these had cost a life before it reached Scovell's hands.

Among the documents not in cypher—probably therefore taken from an escorted aide-de-camp and not from a detected spy—were two of particular interest to a student of the outstanding personalities of the British Peninsular army. They were dated from Salamanca on April 28, 1812. The first was a dispatch from General Lamartinière, Marmont's Chief of the Staff, to Clarke, the War Minister at Paris. The purport of it was that the celebrated Grant, a most suspicious character, had been captured within the French lines. The Marshal would have had him tried and shot as a spy, if he had not been wearing British uniform. Instead, his parole not to escape had been taken from him, and he was being sent with a convoy returning to Bayonne. On reaching that place the police should at once take possession of him. Enclosed in this letter was Colquhoun Grant's promise, written in French, that he would not attempt to escape from his escort between Salamanca and Bayonne, on his word of honour. This was countersigned by Lamartinière. The two papers had got to Scovell's hands early in May, so evidently the bearer had been waylaid and captured not long after he had left Salamanca.

These documents took one back at once to one of the

most daring escapes of a British prisoner which can be found in the annals of the Napoleonic Wars—an escape carried out with an almost absurd nonchalance and readiness of wit. The tale was known to Napier, who thought it so curious that he spared four pages for it in a chapter of his fourth volume. And Mr. John Buchan made an excellent story out of it in one of his volumes of miscellaneous adventures, with confirmatory detail out of his fertile imagination, and an exciting account of Grant's dealings with Spanish guerrilleros, who sought to rescue him, and were refused his permission to carry him off.

What really happened I can give from the memoirs of Colquhoun Grant's brother-in-law, Sir James McGrigor, who devoted a chapter to the exploits of his *evasive* and *resourceful* relative.

Colquhoun Grant, of the 11th Foot, was one of four officers whom Wellington employed on special reconnoitring and Intelligence duties. They were all good horsemen, good linguists in Spanish, French, and Portuguese, and noted for resourcefulness and cool heads. Whenever the French were on the move it was their duty to hang about the advancing army, on its flank sometimes, not infrequently in its rear, and to report to headquarters all important developments. These officers were Colquhoun Grant, Waters of the Portuguese Staff, Leith Hay of the 29th Foot, and Charles Somers Cocks of the 16th Light Dragoons. The pitcher that goes often to the well ends by being broken, and all these gallant Intelligence officers came to their day of ill-luck; it was impossible to foresee all possible dangers. Waters was captured on the Coa in April 1811, Leith Hay near Toledo in April 1813, Somers Cocks was killed in action (*not* while scouting) at Burgos in October 1812. Of Colquhoun Grant's extraordinary capture and escape this screed must suffice to tell the tale.

When Marmont made his unlucky incursion into Portugal in April 1812, thinking to draw Wellington off from the siege of Badajoz, he miscalculated his times, and while he was raiding Guarda and Castello Branco, Badajoz fell.

The British General started off at once to waylay the Marshal before he could get back to Spain, and nearly succeeded in his plan. For the details of his enveloping scheme it was necessary to know exactly how the French lay, and Grant had been sent ahead, to locate the position of each of Marmont's divisions, even before Wellington started from Badajoz. Now, in Spain, as Grant maintained, he would never have been captured. He was known all up and down the frontier of Estremadura and Leon, welcome in every village, and a household word for ingenuity and daring. "He was proficient in their provincial dialects, intimately acquainted with their songs, their music, and their domestic habits. He was an enthusiastic admirer of the Spanish character, well read in their literature, and he even danced their national dances most admirably. He was such a favourite with priests and peasantry, his name was so widespread, and the devotion felt to him so strong, that far in the rear of the French posts he slept secure. His knowledge of the enemy's army was exact. He knew not only the regiments, but the character of every superior officer, almost of every *chef de bataillon*." In his personal habits he was a stoic, sleeping frequently in the field under any chance shelter, and occasionally in the hills with no shelter at all, in any kind of weather, secure of being passed on ultimately from one padre or peasant to another.

Now, on April 10, 1812, Marmont lay, quite unsuspecting the vicinity of Wellington, at Sabugal, while the British army was advancing by forced marches, and had its leading divisions at Castello Branco. Grant was watching the passes over the Sierra de Estrella between the two armies, in the neighbourhood of Idanha Nova and Penamacor, intent on discovering whether the enemy, after his raid on and evacuation of Castello Branco, was about to retreat to Salamanca, or to sit down to the siege of Almeida or Ciudad Rodrigo, while keeping a covering force in his front at Sabugal. As chance would have it, two French scouting parties were sweeping the country-side for

provisions, on each flank of the point of view from which Grant was watching the road to Sabugal, from the cover of a thin belt of wood. He was accompanied by a Spanish peasant named Leon, his guide on many excursions along the neighbouring frontier, but less versed in the country-side of the Upper Beira. By ill-luck a French officer, using his telescope to search the hill-sides along the road, caught a glimpse of Grant's red coat among the trees, and detached a party of dragoons to cut him off. Grant and his companion rode away to escape them, under cover of the wood, and did so for the moment. But being cut off from the road, they descended unwittingly into the midst of the other French scouting party, which was working along the hill-sides a mile or two away, and, being fired on from several directions, had to cast their horses loose and to try to escape among some inclosures on steep ground. Pursued by small parties of infantry, they were ultimately run down and surrounded. Grant's companion was shot, he himself taken prisoner and conducted to Marmont's headquarters at Sabugal. The Marshal was interested to discover what the presence of a British staff officer among these lonely hills might mean, more especially when he discovered that the captive was the celebrated Major Grant.

The Marshal thought that he had a fine opportunity for extracting information by finesse, and with feigned courtesy invited Grant to dine with him. He turned the conversation on to various topics: the character of Lord Wellington, the strong and weak points of the British army, its losses at the recent capture of Badajoz, and former exploits of Grant himself. To his surprise the prisoner found himself credited with several wholly apocryphal feats, e.g. that he had recently slept in the French headquarters under a disguise. He gradually got to understand that he was being confused with another Grant, also (as Napier remarks) a very remarkable man in his line, who had been wont to pervade all Spain under various assumed characters. "What the peculiar features of the character of this person

—Lieutenant John Grant, of the 2nd [Veteran] Battalion—may have been", writes McGrigor, "I cannot take upon me to describe. But he and Colquhoun Grant were at opposite poles in the estimation of the Spaniards. My brother-in-law they designated 'Granto el Bueno', the other 'Granto el Malo'." The prisoner gradually came to see that he was being accused, in a bantering sort of way, of exploits contrary to the laws of war, and even to the laws of honour, and that it was little use disclaiming them. The conversation was continually turning on Wellington's next move after the capture of Badajoz. Grant, who knew that his chief was at that moment marching on Sabugal with seven divisions at his back, had the greatest difficulty in putting questions aside and giving no hint of his knowledge. At the end of the dinner Marmont, finding that he could get nothing out of his guest, asked him whether he would give his word of honour not to attempt escape, or be put under strict confinement. Grant gave his parole.

As they were breaking up the Marshal remarked that he should be very grateful for the red coat on his back: but for that he would have suffered the penalty of the spy—a gallows twenty feet high.

Only just in time, for Wellington was now within a day's march of him with a very superior force, Marmont retreated hastily on Salamanca. On his arrival there Grant was not treated at all as an officer on parole: a sentry was placed at his door, and a French captain was billeted with him, and seldom let him out of sight. Nevertheless, the prisoner contrived to send more than one secret missive to Wellington, with news as to the disposition of Marmont's army.

McGrigor says that Wellington, to whom he was making daily reports on his department, was continually harping on the subject of Grant's captivity. "He was worth a brigade to me; I wish he had not given his parole. If he had not done so, I should have offered a high reward to the guerrilla chiefs for his rescue." A day after he observed: "Grant is really an extraordinary fellow. What think you

of him, at this moment, when a prisoner, sending me information?" And therewith he showed two twisted scraps of paper, which, he said, a peasant had brought in that morning, and added: " 'The information, coming from Grant, I know will be correct, and is most valuable.' He then read me a courteous reply to a letter which he had written to Marshal Marmont, offering to give in exchange for Grant any officer of the rank of colonel; he had several of them ready after the fall of Badajoz."

Marmont in his answer promised an exchange, and added some polite remarks about the pleasure that it would give him to oblige an adversary of merit. After reading it, McGrigor expressed joy at the likelihood of seeing his brother-in-law in no long time. "Don't you believe it", said Wellington. "There is not a word of truth in his promise, for here I hold a dispatch from him to the Minister of War at Paris, which has been intercepted by Don Julian." It described Grant as a mischievous spy, who was being sent to France under a strong escort, and recommended him to the strictest surveillance of the police. This is undoubtedly the letter which I found myself among the Scovell papers, though it is signed by Lamartinière, Marmont's Chief of Staff, and not by the Marshal himself.

Before April was over Grant was started off from Salamanca to Bayonne, travelling with an escort of 300 time-expired or drafted soldiers, and several officers who had been given short leave from the front. Among these was General Souham, then the senior divisional general in Marmont's army, who had three months' leave on urgent private affairs. Grant got on admirably with his travelling companions, but was pondering, all through his journey across Castile, on the fact that his parole expired at Bayonne, and that from there onward matters were likely to be less pleasant.

The convoy, as it chanced, reached Bayonne in the dusk. It halted in the square, and all the unattached officers busied themselves in procuring billets, or going to the post establishment to secure horses or places in the

diligence. As to English prisoners, it was customary for them to go to the prefecture and obtain a passport to travel to Verdun, the great place of internment. This Grant did without difficulty, the letter commending him to the Bayonne police having been intercepted by Julian Sanchez many days before. No one was on the look-out to take him into custody.

Now, most men, finding themselves loose and no longer tied by a parole, would have tried to escape toward the neighbouring Pyrenees, and to seek shelter with the bands of Mina or El Pastor, or some other guerrillero chief of the mountains. Not so Colquhoun Grant, who considered that he had a unique opportunity of getting military impressions of France. Having procured his *feuille de route* for Verdun, he went to look up General Souham, who as he knew was starting for Paris at once, and offered to share his posting expenses as far as Orleans, where the routes for Paris and Verdun diverged. The General, who knew all about Grant, and had found him an amusing companion on the tedious journey from Salamanca, made no difficulty. And it was in the company of a very distinguished French commander that the prisoner-of-war made the first half of his journey.

At Orleans he discovered "by a species of intuition", says Napier—McGrigor gives no particulars of this incident —an English secret agent, who assisted him to get rid of his uniform, and passed him on to Paris. Here he was accredited to another secret friend, Mr. McPherson, "an eminent jeweller" of old Jacobite descent, who had resided in France all his life, and had been a prisoner in the Conciergerie during the Reign of Terror. Was he by any chance one of the persons to whom Baron Kolli had taken his diamonds two years before? It seems not unlikely. McPherson procured for him an American passport, and it was as a citizen of the United States that he spent several weeks in a conscientious study of Paris; picking up political and military gossip in cafés, watching assiduously the reviews in the Champs de Mars, visiting

the theatres and the Louvre, and generally making observations on the state of French public opinion. McGrigor states that his brother-in-law actually succeeded in sending to Wellington from Paris some useful notes about the distraction of all French troops eastward for the approaching invasion of Russia, which would make it incredible that any further reinforcements would be sent to Spain. There is a note on this in one of Wellington's June dispatches to Lord Bathurst.

The end of Grant's stay in Paris came when Mr. McPherson informed him that his constant presence at reviews and ceremonies was beginning to attract the attention of the police toward such an inquisitive and rather mysterious American. He had better move on, and the chance for departure was provided by his taking up the personality of another American, a Mr. Jonathan Buck, who had died suddenly just as his passport, with a visé for return to Boston, had been made out. Accordingly, Grant changed his personality, and incidentally made some alterations in his personal appearance and his clothing, and started for Nantes, as Mr. Buck seeking a passage in some American merchantman returning to New England.

Here, unfortunately, world-politics intervened to check his scheme. The month was now June, and the formal declaration of war on Great Britain by the United States was on the eve of being launched.[1] It was known everywhere to be overdue, as it was being concerted in strict agreement with Napoleon. American shipmasters in French ports, already sufficiently incommoded by the French "Berlin Decrees" and the British "Orders in Council", saw that their return voyage would be more dangerous than ever, when open warfare between their country and Great Britain had broken out. Hence they deferred sailing, and the master of the vessel on which Grant had engaged a passage frankly told him that he could not say when he would be able to start. Now Grant, always a "good mixer"

[1] It was finally proclaimed on July 17th.

in modern parlance, had completely won the confidence of this captain, and, when he found the voyage postponed *ad infinitum*, revealed to him that he was an escaped British prisoner, seeking to get back to England. The American advised him to sink the identity of Mr. Buck, a wealthy traveller, and to assume that of a discharged American seaman, of whom there were many adrift at that moment in the French ports. He gave him a discharge from his ship and a sailor's dress, and got the United States Consul at Nantes to furnish him with a certificate as a sailor seeking a ship, which would enable him to pass from port to port without molestation by the police, or to hang about on shore as long as he pleased.

As an American seaman on the tramp Grant dropped down to the coast (St-Nazaire or Paimbœuf?), and set out to feel cautiously around for a fisherman who would take him out at night to a small island off the Loire mouth where English vessels of the blockading fleet habitually put in to take water. There are several such islets between Noirmoutier and Le Croisic—which particular one is in question neither McGrigor nor Napier makes clear. The boatman was a shifty person—apparently he was hypnotized by the sight of the large sum of ten gold napoleons which Grant had shown him as his promised fee for the passage. At any rate, after having got well out to sea and in sight of the island, and of the masts of a British man-of-war on the other side, he turned his helm, and refused to proceed. He and his mate assumed a threatening air, and Grant half believed that he was in danger of his life on account of the gold which he had displayed: the fisherman thought that he had more on him. The boat drifted back to the coast —Grant expecting every moment to be attacked, and preparing to defend himself. However, no assault came, but when they touched land the fisherman demanded the ten napoleons. Grant threw him one piece, and some bitter language; the man then threatened to denounce him to the police. To which his passenger replied that, if he did so, he would make the counter-charge of an attempt to secure

the escape of a prisoner-of-war, which would mean months of prison.

And so they parted in wrath. Grant on mature reflection thought it best to remove himself from the spot, lest the angry fisherman should, after all, set the police on his trail. It was inconvenient, for his money was nearly at an end; he had only a few francs over the ten napoleons in gold. His next step was perhaps the most extraordinary one in the whole of the tale. I must give it in the words of his brother-in-law McGrigor, who can hardly have invented it:

"Grant learned that not many leagues from where he was a French Marshal of Scottish descent, a relation of his own mother's, had his seat, and he determined to make for it. He walked the whole of that night, and during the following day remained concealed in a dry ditch, overhung with weeds. He resumed his journey on the following night, and on the next day reached the mansion of the Marshal. On obtaining an interview with him, and explaining who he was, the Marshal immediately acknowledged the relationship and ordered refreshments for him. But he said that he did not think that it would be safe for Grant to prolong his stay in his house. He gave him, however, 100 *louis d'or*, with which he returned to the port that he had left."

This raises problems. There were only two marshals with British blood in them—Macdonald, whose grandfather had been a Jacobite exile, and Mortier, whose grandmother had come from across the Channel. But in June 1812 Macdonald was certainly in Germany, as his Memoirs show, so cannot have been the person intended. Mortier may conceivably have been the man; but, though he was in Paris in May, he had received orders on June 9th to take the command of the Imperial Guard, then on its march towards the Russian frontier, and to be at Königsberg by June 27th, as the correspondence of Napoleon shows. It certainly looks difficult to believe that he was at his château in Anjou at any date in mid-June, which is the time required by the sequence of dates in Grant's

wanderings. It is possible that he may have made a flying visit thither on getting his marching orders, to arrange his affairs, or to see his family.

For the rest, Mortier's record fits the story exactly. He had British blood, as his name Edward shows; had been educated at the English college at Douai; and had been across the Channel as a young man, "spending my father's money, I fear", as he confided to another English prisoner-of-war, Charles Boothby, to whom he had shown extraordinary kindness after the Battle of Talavera. I have found notes of him in the memoirs of other officers, who praise his humanity, his pity for prisoners, and his extraordinary good and fluent English diction. After the Napoleonic Wars were over, he visited Great Britain at least once, and picked up some old relationships. But that Mortier was in Anjou about June 15, 1812, I cannot prove, nor indeed does it seem very likely. On the other hand, it appears almost incredible that Sir James McGrigor can have got out of his brother-in-law Grant a tale about a French marshal which had no foundation whatever.

However this may be, the adventurer was back near the mouth of the Loire before the end of June, searching for a more trustworthy boat-owner, not too close to the place where he had picked up his first unlucky bargain. This time he was more fortunate, and found a very honest old man, who with his son was accustomed to fish off the island where the British cruisers were wont to water. This day, however, there was no sail in sight, and after casting his nets a few times and catching some fish, he was constrained to coast southward and homeward. While passing a shore battery at the mouth of the river a shot was fired across the boat's bows, and a party of coastguards came out in a launch. The old fisherman placed Grant with his back to the mast, and twisted the sail, which he had let down, twice around him, so that he was invisible. The soldiers explained that the shot had been fired to give warning that there was an English 74 lying out a few miles in the offing, and that fishermen were prohibited from

going too far away from the batteries. However, the old man pacified them with a gift of some of his fish, and explained that he was so well acquainted with the coast that there was no danger of his getting into trouble. He lay by, as directed, till dusk, and then raised his sail again, and detecting the British man-of-war by her lights, ran out to sea, put Grant on board, and received his well-merited ten napoleons.

Grant reported himself in London, where his name was well known from Wellington's dispatches, and got leave from the Transport Office to send a French officer of his own rank to the Exchange Bureau at Morlaix; for he thought that this was due on a scrupulous interpretation of the rights and wrongs of his escape. Visiting the prison camp at Porchester, he was vexed to find the old fisherman who had delivered him, and also his son, as newly arrived prisoners. They had been captured only a few days later, in spite of a "protection" which he had left with them, commending them to the good will of all naval officers. Grant obtained their release, and sent them back to France with a sum of money competent to purchase them a new boat.

It will scarcely be believed that this resourceful man was back in the Peninsula by September and reported himself to Wellington just four months after he had been captured near Sabugal. His chief got him a brevet-colonelcy without delay, and employed him as his head Intelligence officer during the remaining eighteen months of the war.

He was again called out during the Hundred Days from the Military College at Farnham, where he had been given a berth as instructor in 1814, and was put by Wellington in charge of his Intelligence department in Belgium. He always maintained that the surprise of the British and Prussian armies by Napoleon on June 15th would never have taken place but for the stupidity of a cavalry brigadier, who stopped one of his emissaries bearing certain news of the outmarch of the French army. Grant's messenger was detained by the Hanoverian general Dörnberg,

whose cavalry was watching the frontier about Tournai and Mons. He did not send him on till the fighting had already begun around Charleroi, and Grant could only deliver the message to Wellington a day late, when the Battle of Quatre-Bras had actually begun. The loss of the twenty-four hours was almost irreparable: if Dörnberg had not stopped the all-important news, Wellington's whole army would have been concentrated a day earlier than was actually the case, and he would certainly have co-operated with Blücher at Ligny, instead of being forced to hold back Ney at Quatre-Bras with detachments that kept dropping in all through the day.

Grant was put on half-pay, much to his disgust, in 1816, but went out to India in command of the 54th Foot in 1821. There he took part in the Burmese War of 1824, in charge of the brigade which overran the province of Arracan. Unfortunately he contracted a persistent malarial fever in the swamps of that unhealthy region and had to be invalided home. He never recovered his health, and died, aged only forty-nine, at Aix-la-Chapelle on October 20, 1829. His monument is—or was when I was last in the old Imperial city—visible in its Protestant cemetery.

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X

A PRISONER OF ALBUERA

THE JOURNAL OF MAJOR WILLIAM BROOKE FROM MAY 18 TO SEPTEMBER 28, 1811

THE manuscript Journal here printed was found among the papers of Sir James Stevenson Barnes, one of the best known of Wellington's Peninsular brigadiers, who executed five days after Sauroren an attack which Wellington called the best and boldest that he had ever seen in his life. Sir James's heirs supposed that the Journal, which is without signature or title, belonged to their relative, but this is clearly not the case, as he never served in the 2nd Division nor in Colborne's brigade. Internal evidence makes it certain that the author was Major William Brooke of the 2/48th. He mentions that he was a major, that he served in the 2/48th, and (of course) that he was taken prisoner at Albuera. Now, Brooke of the 48th was the *only* major among the fifteen unfortunate officers who were captured by the charge of the Polish Lancers at the commencement of that bloody fray. He must undoubtedly have been a close friend of Barnes, and have either given him or lent him this manuscript. It consists of eighty-eight sheets of foolscap, partly with the watermark of B.W. 1810, partly with that of a lion *statant reguardant* in a crowned garter. They are bound together in a limp mottled cover. The writing is large, very slanting, and difficult to read, owing to the faded ink. The narrative was undoubtedly written immediately after the author's return to England as an invalid, in the September that followed his escape from Seville. In no year after 1811

would it have been natural for him to use so much paper bearing the watermark of 1810.

I know no more of Major Brooke than may be gathered from the "Army List". He entered the service in 1782, at the end of the old American War, was a captain in the 48th by 1795, and a major by 1810. After the adventures recorded in these pages, he recovered completely from his wounds, rejoined his regiment, and was promoted to a lieutenant-colonelcy in 1815, in which year he went on half-pay. If this narrative meets the eye of any relative or descendant, I should be glad to have further information about him.

It may help the reader to comprehend the story of Major Brooke's travels with his companions in captivity to Seville, if we give the names of the whole fifteen. They were Captains Spedding and Phillips of the 4th Dragoons, Lieutenant Blumenbach of the Artillery of the King's German Legion, Captain Cameron and Lieutenants Hill and Annesley of the 3rd Foot (Buffs), and from the 2/48th Brooke himself, Captains Campbell and Allman, Lieutenants Elwood, Marshall, Sark, Wood, and Brotheridge, and Ensign Gilbert. The first, second, fourth, eighth, and ninth of them will be found mentioned in the narrative. Cameron escaped from his captors at Ribera on May 19th; the other officers, all I believe wounded, were brought to Seville. Of the rank and file of the same regiments 504 in all were captured at the same time as their officers, of whom 193 belonged to Brooke's battalion. More than half of them were wounded; but of the remainder the greater part escaped by the way, in twos and threes, between Almendralejo and Llerena.

It will be noted that Brooke nowhere gives the names of the Spanish friends who behaved so kindly towards him. This was done in their interest, in case his narrative should by any chance get into the English newspapers. For by indiscreet publication of names in this fashion several good patriots had been ruined. On one occasion an English officer's letter, printed in a London journal, disclosed the

identity of some inhabitants of Salamanca who had sent Wellington secret intelligence. A copy got to Paris, and the writer's indiscretion nearly caused the death of these valuable correspondents.

THE JOURNAL.

On the morning of May 16, 1811, our whole army, English and Spanish, was drawn up in two lines along the heights of Albuera. We of the 2nd Division were in the right centre. The enemy commenced their attack by a lively advance against the bridge and village in front of us. The 2/48th and its neighbours in Colborne's brigade suffered very considerably from the cannonade, losing several men killed and wounded by random cannon shot that came over the hill in our front. But this was an evil that did not long continue. The fire becoming extremely warm at the village and bridge, Sir William Beresford ordered forward our brigade to support the fatigued battalions of the German Legion, who were gallantly defending those posts. But before we had reached the village the attack there slackened, and the most tremendous fire commenced on the extreme right of our line, at the hill on which Blake's Spaniards were posted. It obliged them to retire, and to take shelter in good order under cover of the slope. In consequence of the retreat of the Spaniards our brigade (1st Brigade of the 2nd Division, consisting of the 3rd or Buffs, 31st, 66th, and 2/48th) received orders to mount the hill and dislodge the enemy. On gaining the summit of the hill we discovered several very heavy columns of French troops ready to receive us. The British line deployed, halted, and fired two rounds: the heads of the French columns returned the fire three deep, the front rank kneeling.

Finding these columns were not to be shaken by fire, the three leading battalions of the brigade prepared to charge with the bayonet, by order of Major-General the Hon. William Stewart, who led them on in person to the attack in the most gallant manner. The charge being delivered, the French 28th Léger gave way, as did also

the front ranks of their Grenadiers.[1] In the latter we could see the officers trying to beat back the men with the flats of their swords.

During this contest a body of French cavalry, that had been judiciously posted on the left rear of their heavy column, took advantage of our brigade's being unsupported, galloped round the hill, some 2,500 strong,[2] and coming into the rear of our unfortunate battalions, cut them off. Two squadrons of our 4th Dragoons were dispatched by General Lumley for the purpose of giving us assistance: but they only shared the same fate as our infantry, and their commanding officers, Captains Phillips and Spedding, were both of them made prisoners. The 31st Regiment, the left battalion of our brigade, alone escaped: it was still at the foot of the hill in solid column, not having had time to deploy along with the 3rd, 66th, and 48th.

Part of the victorious French cavalry were Polish Lancers: from the conduct of this regiment on the field of action I believe many of them to have been intoxicated, as they rode over the wounded, barbarously darting their lances into them. Several unfortunate prisoners were killed in this manner, while being led from the field to the rear of the enemy's lines. I was an instance of their inhumanity: after having been most severely wounded in the head, and plundered of everything that I had about me, I was being led as a prisoner between two French infantry soldiers, when one of these Lancers rode up, and deliberately cut me down. Then, taking the skirts of my regimental coat, he endeavoured to pull it over my head. Not satisfied with this brutality, the wretch tried by every means in his power to make his horse trample on me, by dragging me along the ground and wheeling his horse over my body. But the beast, more merciful than the rider, absolutely

[1] Apparently Brooke means the three battalions of *Grenadiers réunis* of the 1st and 4th Corps, which were acting along with Gazan's division, to which the 28th Léger belonged. I have no other evidence that the Grenadiers were in front line.

[2] The charge was executed by the 1st Lancers of the Vistula (Poles), and 2nd and 10th Hussars—in all 1,200 lances and sabres.

refused to comply with his master's wishes, and carefully avoided putting his foot on me!

From this miserable situation I was rescued by two French infantry soldiers, who with a dragoon guarded me to the rear. This last man had the kindness to carry me on his horse over the river Albuera, which from my exhausted state I could not have forded on foot. The cause of my being so carefully looked after was that my captors would not believe that I was of no higher rank than a major. I was led to some rising ground on the left rear of the French army, from which the remaining part of the action was clearly to be seen. I was a prisoner, dreadfully wounded, and loss of blood had made me faint and weak, yet, notwithstanding all my misfortunes, my whole heart was with my countrymen, and from the brisk fire they kept up I augured a successful end to the battle. About two o'clock I had the happiness of seeing the French run, and the English mounting the hill and giving three cheers. At this moment I was sent to the rear.

When I arrived at the French hospital, one of their surgeons, seeing me so badly wounded, left his own people and examined my head. He cut off much of my hair, and, having put some lint on my two wounds, tied up my head so tightly, to keep the skull together, that I could not open my mouth for three days, except to take a little to drink. He told me that at the expiration of that time I might venture to loosen the bandage a little. This surgeon spoke English tolerably well: having been a prisoner in our country, and well treated, he had a respect for us. Of my final recovery he gave me little hope, as my skull had received fractures of whose consequences he was fearful. The French soldiers abused him for attending to me before them: he left, promising to see me again, but I never met with him after.

Weak as I was, I reconnoitred the French guard over the prisoners in the evening: it had been reinforced, and their sentries being posted three deep, I found it impossible to get past them, although on the other side of the river

I could see my friends resting on their arms after their victory. The night was extremely cold and damp: we had but few clothes left, and no blankets. We made a fire by gathering boughs from the trees near us, but could get no sleep from the pain of our wounds, the loss of blood, and our distressing circumstances.

May 17th. On the morning, and during the day following the battle, part of the dispirited French army was left under the command of General Gazan, who was wounded himself, to make preparations for the evacuation of their hospitals to the rear. The French are generally well supplied with conveyances for this purpose; on this occasion they had not less than eighty or a hundred large covered wagons for the use of the worst cases, exclusive of many horses, mules, and asses. These wagons had been brought up laden with provisions to the field of battle, and after being emptied were applied to any other purpose necessary. But on this occasion, from the enormous number of wounded that they had to remove, they found it necessary to force the British soldiers, who had fallen into their hands as prisoners, to carry some of their generals and other officers of note on litters. Being disgusted with his burden, through fatigue and the heat of the sun, one of the prisoners exclaimed to his comrades: "D—n this rascal, let us throw him down and break his neck." To the surprise of the soldiers, the wounded general lifted his head and replied in English: "No, I hope not." Those of the prisoners who did not escape[1] were handsomely paid for their trouble.

May 18th. About two o'clock in the morning the main convoy of wounded, amounting to near 4,000 in all, was put in motion. Dreadful were the cries of these poor unfortunate wretches! Had my heart been made of adamant I must have felt for the pitiable condition to which the ravages of war had brought them. It was completely daylight before the rear of the convoy left the ground. Two

[1] Of the 500 rank and file taken prisoners more than half succeeded in escaping at Usagre and other places on the line of the French retreat.

or three hundred had died on the 17th, and between 600 and 700 more expired on the road to Seville. It was stated to me by a French surgeon that they left on the field some, both of their own and of the British wounded, who could not bear transport.[1]

A strong guard, both of cavalry and infantry, some 3,500 men, was told off to guard the British prisoners, who were placed in the centre of the marching column. We proceeded on the 18th along the road leading from Albuera to Solana —four long leagues. On our arrival at the latter place the principal part of the wounded were taken into the town: the escort did not enter it, but was drawn up on some high ground, to prevent a surprise by guerrillas, of whom they were extremely afraid. The cries of the wounded continued dreadful. All the British prisoners slept in an open field, with a strong guard around them. The only sustenance that we had were a few green beans (*garbanzos*), which the French gathered and gave to us. Indeed, this was the only food they could procure for themselves.

May 19th. Orders had been given overnight to march at three o'clock, before dawn, but from the difficulty of getting the wounded back into the wagons it was near six before escort, wounded, and prisoners marched for Ribera. We passed through Almendralejo, where the French troops took care to plunder the inhabitants of everything that they could lay hands upon. At this point one of the French generals wounded at Albuera died.[2] We continued our march to Ribera, and having to halt by the side of a rivulet I got one of the prisoners to wash my bloodstained coat, shirt, pantaloons, and socks, the only remaining clothes left me. I borrowed of a French soldier a blanket to sit in, and the same soldier gave me some soap. During this same time another prisoner washed the wounds on my head, and removed the clotted blood from my face. It was dried so hard with the sun that he was obliged to

[1] Quite correct. The British found 300 or 400 men, mostly amputation cases, left in the chapel behind the wood of Albuera.

[2] This was General Pepin, of the 5th Corps.

peel it off with his finger-nails. My clothes were quickly dried, the heat being intense, and soon after we reached Ribera. Arriving there, we were lodged in an olive garden surrounded by a high wall. Having chosen a place to rest, I pulled grass for my bed. This being arranged, I went to Captain Cameron of the Buffs, who kindly insisted on my taking a basin of soup. Calling me aside, he told me that he intended to effect his escape, and if I was sufficiently strong he would gladly take me on the venture. I told him I was too sick and weak to attempt it. He regretted that he had but a few dollars in his possession, and requested I would accept one of them. All this day the guerrillas had been hovering in considerable numbers on our flanks, as they did all the way to Seville. The French took every precaution for safety, having vedettes out, and a strong guard both in front and rear.

After parting with Captain Cameron I returned to my bed under the wall, and being extremely fatigued, fell into a sound sleep. I was disturbed from it by a person who informed me he was sent by a Spanish gentleman in the town, to request I would get leave to go to his house. The French officer of the guard gave me permission, on my promising not to make my escape. This power of giving parole had been granted to him by General Gazan. I was conducted by the messenger to the house of his master, who received me with great cordiality, and leading me to a back room introduced me to his daughter and family. He sent immediately for a surgeon, who dressed my wounds. Curiosity led some of the ladies to watch the operation, but on the bandages being removed, some of them fainted at the horrid sight, and all hurried out. The daughter of this benevolent Spanish gentleman prepared a box with lint and salve for my use on the road. I was then taken into an adjoining room, where I found a most elegant supper laid for six people. All present appeared to be persons of rank, and they paid me every attention in their power. After supper the master of the house attended me to an excellent bedroom, wished me good-night and retired.

I was soon asleep. Long before dawn I felt myself shaken, and was alarmed to find two men standing by my bed. Their dress was the large Spanish cloak and broad-brimmed hat: one carried a dark lantern, and both immense clubs.

I was at first at a loss to comprehend their intentions, but they soon made me understand that their mission was to effect my escape. For some time they positively insisted on my coming off with them. Finding all I could say of no avail, I sent one of them to the master of the house. As I did not speak Spanish sufficiently well to make myself clearly comprehended, I represented to him in Italian, which he well understood, that my escaping might bring destruction on him and his family, that my own honour was pledged, and that, although the opportunity was so favourable to escape, I must decline to take advantage of it. He agreed with me on the force of my arguments, yet from his kind solicitude for my safety it was long before I succeeded in persuading him and his friends to leave my room.

May 20th. In the morning I was roused by my host, and found chocolate ready prepared for me. Soon after the convoy began to move on, when he generously offered me his purse, which with many thanks I refused. He then took from it part of the contents, and pressed me to accept so much, but I again declined, although I possessed but the single dollar which Captain Cameron had left with me.

From Ribera we marched to Villa Garcia, the first town where the escort drew regular rations: from that time they were well supplied till they reached Seville. Though the town was large, we had not any place appointed for our accommodation. I met in the market-place a French colonel who spoke English very well. To him I related the distress of the prisoners, in not being allowed a house or billet to shelter us, and pointed out that, if my petition were not complied with, we should have to sleep in the street. I said that I should feel obliged if he would represent to General Gazan what I had told him. He went to the

General, and in a short time returned to say that a house had been allotted for us, and put into possession of a captain of grenadiers who would conduct us to it. We remained waiting in the street two hours, when we heard at last that Captain Campbell of the 48th had actually taken the house destined for our use for himself and a wounded French officer whose horse he was riding. We went there and arranged ourselves as comfortably as we could for the night.

May 21st. This day we marched to Llerena, and were taken through the town to a small swampy field, with a wall round it and a little rivulet running through, a place so wet that to lie down was impossible. It added to our discomfort to see not far off shady trees on a rising ground, where we might well have been placed. My brother officers agreed with myself that this was very severe treatment, and begged I would represent to General Gazan the state we were placed in. He sent for me and inquired the cause of my complaint. I first set forth the grievance of the wretched swamp we had to rest in. I then told him that from the moment of my capture I had been treated cruelly in every respect. I said that, dreadfully wounded and retiring as a prisoner-of-war from the field, I had been cut down by one of their horse, plundered of everything, and inhumanly dragged over the ground. They had obliged me to walk for four days in a dreadful state of weakness caused by my two wounds: and during those four days I had received from the escort only an ounce and a half of rice and two ounces of mutton. The General replied that with regard to food they themselves had, till this day, only what the soldiers could gather in the fields. To this I answered that we prisoners had not even the power of going to the fields to seek food. General Gazan finally offered us our parole, which we accepted: it was signed by all. That night he gave orders that I might have a horse, but I could not get one, as they had not even a sufficient number for their own use. For what reason I am ignorant, the General abused Captain Campbell at

the meeting, using the most violent language, and calling him f——d, and many other improper names.

May 22nd. This day we reached Guadalcanal, and having given our parole were at liberty to make our situation as comfortable as circumstances permitted. We knocked at a large house, where we were immediately admitted. Within its decayed walls lived an old lady and her two daughters, who received us politely, and seeing our fatigue kindly prepared beds and food for us. The old lady was extremely pleased to find that I could speak Italian, and began a conversation in that language. She told me she was the daughter of a man of rank in Portugal, and had married a Spanish nobleman who lately, from grief at the misfortunes of his country and his family, had died of a broken heart. Before the French had arrived in Spain they had lived in great affluence, but now they had deprived her of everything, from her plate to the cattle and corn in her fields. During this long and melancholy tale I felt extremely fatigued, but whenever I attempted to stir the old lady detained me by taking hold of my coat. I was at last released by one of General Gazan's aides-de-camp, who came to ask if I wanted another billet, but finding me provided, politely bowed to us and left.

May 23rd. We marched this day to Constantina. I was billeted on a carpenter, who received me in a civil manner, made up a bed for me in a corner of the room, and began to prepare food. I was not long seated when two graceful and elegant young Spanish ladies, dressed in pelisses and half-boots, entered the room. One of them had a long whip in her hand—at first sight I concluded that they belonged to a Spanish whip-club—but from the respect that the people of the house paid them I soon saw that they were persons of distinction. They addressed me in Spanish, but, finding I did not well understand their language, made me comprehend, in the best way they could, that they had brought a surgeon to dress my wounds. He was called in, and was followed by a group of young women, gaping with open mouths, like one of Hogarth's caricatures. The

doctor unbound my head, dressed it, and tied it up again. Some of the girls were then called forward, with a basket filled with sweetmeats, fruit, and cake, and at least a gallon and a half of excellent wine, of which the young ladies pressed me to partake. They endeavoured to cheer my spirits, which from excessive fatigue were very low: they seated themselves on my right hand and on my left, and one of them desired a girl to come forward with some cigars: she gave one to her sister, and having lighted another, put it to her own mouth, and then passed it to me. At first I received it with some reluctance, until I understood that this was the highest compliment a Spanish lady could pay a gentleman. They remained with me some time, then politely wishing me good night, left me to enjoy the rest that wearied nature craved.

May 24th. This day we moved on to Tocina, a very long day's work. We crossed the river Guadalquivir about two o'clock. We found only one large boat to carry over the whole convoy. At that time it consisted of about 4,200 infantry and 800 cavalry, beside the prisoners and the vast assembly of wounded. But by this time there remained but few of the English prisoners, nearly all who were not either wounded or on parole having escaped on the road. I asked a commandant to permit the English officers to go over early, which he was kind enough to allow us to do. But, although assisted by our French guards, we found great difficulty in getting to the boat: several times I was completely crushed in, and found it likely that I should lose a part of my coat. We saw many horses pushed into the river by the press. We at last arrived at the opposite bank, and proceeded to Tocina, where we were billeted in the house of a gentleman-farmer. The place was so crowded that we had only a small room for six officers, and in one beyond it a French sergeant of dragoons had taken up his abode. I never saw such a fop: several times he passed through the room in which we lay, whistling loudly and swinging his cap in his hand. Altogether his conduct was so noisy and unpleasant that some of the

officers went to the Alcalde, to endeavour to get him moved, but in vain, for the Alcalde was a timid man and fearful of the French. The sergeant was so insolent that they wished to kick him out, from which I saved him by representing to my young friends the danger they would bring on themselves in case he made complaint. I also said that the fellow would soon have the assurance to address us, in which case I requested that no gentleman present would make any reply whatever, which would mortify the sergeant much more than any other conduct we could pursue. Soon after he did, indeed, impudently bring forward a chair, and place it in the midst of us six, and then, turning to one after the other, inquired which of us understood French: no reply whatever being made, he rested a short time, stalked out, and we never saw him after.

May 25th. On this day's march leading to Seville numerous beautiful villages lay along the roadside and the banks of the Guadalquivir, which is very large and navigable. Its name was given it by the Moors, and the translation is "the Great River".[1] Finding myself much fatigued, I stopped at one village, and entering a cottage asked for bread and water, which was given to me immediately. I had not been there ten minutes before some French soldiers came in sight: the cottager instantly hid the bread, but the precaution was unnecessary, for they did not come into her house, but entering the next asked for something to eat. On the poor woman's saying she had not anything either for them or for herself, one of the soldiers, speaking in a language I could not understand, drew a sharp knife and dropped it point downwards through her foot. The poor creature screamed, and immediately found bread for the man who had so cruelly treated her.

I continued my march with my friend Captain Phillips of the 4th Dragoons, and seeing a fine hawthorn bush in full bloom we determined to rest under the shade for a short time. On reaching the spot we discovered a fine tall French officer sitting under the tree, with a looking-glass

[1] Wady-el-kebir, quite correct.

in his hand, contemplating a face which I do suppose had once been as fine as his figure. But this unfortunate gentleman had received at Albuera a blow of a sabre, by which not only was his nose cut off close to his face, but his upper lip at the same time. I was shocked at the horrid sight. He spoke to me in the best manner he could, and pointing to my bandaged head he said, "I am sorry, sir, that we have both suffered so severely". He pointed to us to sit down beside him, but did not speak again.

We noted that from Llerena onwards the French began to drop a portion of their wounded. Some were left both at Guadalcanal, at Constantina, and at Tocina. I was told afterwards by the people of Seville that this was done with the intent of concealing their real loss at Albuera. I ought to have said before that during all the last six days I had depended on the assistance of Captain Phillips of the 4th Dragoons, who had been unfortunately made prisoner nearly at the same moment as myself. Seeing the weak state I was in, he kindly offered me his help, which I gladly accepted. It is not in the power of words to sufficiently thank him for his unremitting attention on the road to Seville. He never left me, night or day, and, though extremely fatigued himself, rendered me every service in his power. We entered Seville together, having got a little ahead of the remaining officers who were prisoners. The French Town-Major told us to wait for them, which we did, resting under the shadow of a house; the good woman brought us chairs, and I was no sooner seated than I fell into a sound sleep from excess of exhaustion. On the arrival of the other officers the good people of the house invited them in, and gave them cakes and wine. When all were collected they woke me from the sleep of fatigue following long marches in intense heat.

The Town-Major led us from one end of Seville to the other, in order to show the people that they had English prisoners. Well knowing that we were only being led about for a show, I complained of it, and we were at last brought to the Governor, who directed that we were to be taken

to the manufactory of an English merchant, who carried on a large trade in tanning. The French found him useful for saddles, reins, holsters, and shoes, or they would not have allowed him to remain in Seville. The name of the house was Weatherell & Co. Mr. Weatherell received us as countrymen with civility, and went with us to the house of an Englishwoman named Lutsford, where we were well accommodated. She provided us with a good dinner, and happy we were to rest.

May 26th. Everything that money can produce is to be purchased in Seville—content excepted. We had breakfast in great comfort, and soon after a Mr. Neish, nephew to Mr. Weatherell, came in with two Spanish surgeons to dress our wounds. Mr. Weatherell had the power and the wish to do good. He offered us money in return for bills, which we gladly accepted. That night he gave us a friendly invitation to dinner, and, to our surprise, brought several English friends to meet us: I remember the names of a Mr. and Mrs. Stoker, Mr. Markland, besides Mr. Neish and the younger Weatherell. There were others. After dinner they retired to take a sleep, termed by the Spaniards a *siesta,* and in the evening we took tea with Mrs. Stoker, returning to sleep at Mrs. Lutsford's, as comfortable as circumstances would admit.

May 27th. From this day onwards I was so ill that I took to my bed, from fever brought on by wounds and fatigue. My legs and feet were horribly swelled, and the French doctor told the Spanish physician that he much expected that lockjaw would seize me in a few hours. In this deplorable situation I remained for some weeks. Mr. and Mrs. Stoker came two or three times a day to see me, and rendered me every service in their power. The fever at length abated, but my head felt as there were a waterfall on it, and to this feeling was sometimes added a knocking like that of a hammer, which made me so giddy I could not stand. At length I began to gather a little strength; when I was able to move, Mr. and Mrs. Stoker led me between them to their house. They gave me spices,

sago, and many other little things money could not procure. Under their kind treatment I recovered very slowly.

July 4th. After having relieved Badajos, Marshal Soult returned to Seville in great pomp, guarded by the Polish Lancers, extremely distant to every person, and very much out of temper. We had just finished dinner when two *gens d'armes* came into the room and told us Marshal Soult wished to see us. We followed them, and after being led through several streets were lodged in the common prison with the private soldiers. I think they call it the Pomeranian prison. This treatment annoyed us, and we wrote in the name of the whole body of prisoners, requesting to know the cause of our confinement, and asking if there were any cause of complaint against us, as we were ready to meet our accusers before the Marshal. To this no answer was returned. We wrote again, representing the situation we were in, placed in a common prison, and hoping the Marshal would be pleased to allow us some place of quiet. Again no answer. On July 8th two *gens d'armes* came in, and desired us to pack up our clothes, as we were to be moved. They conducted us through many streets, and lodged us under a strong guard in the Prison of the Inquisition. On our way several Spaniards made signs to us, showing us their houses where, if we escaped, we might find hiding.

Thus Marshal Soult broke his faith with two of his own generals in taking away our parole. His want of honour and justice wrought strongly on the minds of all disinterested persons. The French heads of department pitied us extremely, and thought such treatment cruel—we had not been guilty of any fault, nor could they allege any against us. The Marshal was, as we understood from the first of our friends who came to see us, universally blamed.

On entering the prison I noted the jailer's wife and sister, both uncommonly large women, and the idea struck me that, could I become acquainted with them, I might, through their means and dressed in their clothes, effect my escape. But a difficulty arose through my not under-

standing their language well enough. However, we got into communication. They used to sit in an iron balcony, which projected far enough from the wall to overlook the cell in which I sat. I saw that they frequently looked down, and made signs that I wished to speak to them. Ladies are generally pretty quick at taking hints, and next morning, about eleven o'clock, the two came together to the room in which we were lodged. They had no sooner entered than they were followed by the jailer, who caught wife and sister by the shoulders and turned them out, to their great surprise, as they thought that he was from home. This jailer was a Spaniard, but a great scoundrel. From our arrival at Seville Count Daricau had ordered us the same rations as the French officers, but this fellow docked us of our allowance and our wine, in so shameful a manner that we were obliged to complain. He took other advantage of his power, and would not suffer our servant to go out for the most trifling article, but sent for it himself, and charged us double price. I saved him from the effects of the anger of my brother prisoners; but I sincerely hope that the French will think he was accessory to my escape, and flog him heartily, although I must do him the justice in this instance to say that he was quite innocent of it.

July 15th. We had been but a few days in the Inquisition Prison when the Grand Master of the French Freemasons' Lodge discovered that I and Captain Allman were brother masons. He waited on me, and told me that both their Lodge-Room and his own private quarters were in this same vast building where we were confined. The former was a great room in the centre of the building, and very superb. Thence he led me to the dungeons and the old torture-chamber. This was a room of about 24 feet long, with an arched ceiling. In the walls at each end were fixed three staples in a triangle. The upper staple was about 7 feet from the ground; through this the inquisitors used to run a rope, which was passed round the prisoner's neck: the other two are placed opposite each other, 5 feet from the ground, to confine the hands of the wretched criminal.

To extort confession they made use of a machine of boards, which was pressed across the breast of the prisoner. These lumps of wood were commencing to decay: in my opinion the sooner such instruments are entirely gone the better. He also showed me the wheel, on which they break the bones of the legs and arms of their victims. From this dreary place the Grand Master took me to his own quarters on the first floor of the front of the prison. They were most elegantly furnished, and he showed me many pictures of immense value. He introduced me to his lady and her sister, who gave me cake, wine, and French liqueur. He requested his wife to bring me half a dozen of his own shirts and as many pairs of stockings, which he wished to give me as a brother mason. I refused them with thanks, but accepted half a dozen bottles of choice wine, which he sent to the room of our confinement. A few days later he called; in company with a deputation from his lodge, on Captain Allman and myself, to ask whether they could serve us in any way: he assured us that even if we wanted a thousand dollars the masons could get it for us. Being already provided with money, we did not accept this kind offer. But next morning we wrote a polite note to thank the Master and Lodge for their attention to our welfare, and requested it might be read to the Lodge at its first meeting. We said that we should not fail to represent their conduct to our brethren in England. Captain Allman delivered this note in person to the Grand Master.

In this situation we remained for some time; often for days together not a soul was permitted to visit us. But towards the end of July Marshal Soult, having collected and reorganized the remainder of his dispirited army, took his departure for Granada with some 12,000 or 14,000 men. Our former indulgence of seeing friends and visitors was renewed the moment he was gone. They brought us many small presents, and told us all the chit-chat of Seville. At this moment communications between Seville and Madrid had been completely cut off for many weeks by the guerrillas. But now a very large escort, guarding the invalids, prisoners,

and officers under orders for France, was ordered to be got ready to march, at a day's notice, for Madrid. We were told that we should be sent with it, and our friends all came to bid us farewell. Mrs. Stoker brought with her a lady whose story you will probably recollect. She was a young Englishwoman, who effected the escape of a French colonel who had been a prisoner in England. She supplied him with money, ran away with him, and married him in France. It was all published in the newspapers two years ago. The husband's name was Lestruc; he, with ten other chiefs of battalion, was killed at Albuera.[1] Mrs. Lestruc came to solicit the protection of the British officers for herself and certain other widowed ladies, who were returning to France with the convoy. She said that if attacked by guerrillas on the road, they would be massacred, unless covered by our protection. This we gladly promised, and such was the last visit I received in prison.

July 25th. On this morning I was sitting at the iron bars of my window reading the Old Testament, when a Spaniard, who had never been to the prison before, entered my room, and addressed me as follows: "Sir, I saw you through the bars or this window three days since, and from that time I have been led by an impulse, wholly unaccountable to myself, to endeavour to effect your escape. The thought of it disturbs my rest, so that I am often obliged to rise from my bed from the effects of hunger, and to eat." He then took from his pocket a saw and a file, to cut my window-bars, which he begged me to conceal. He also gave me from his shoulders a Spanish cloak, took from out of his hat another one, and produced from his pocket a waistcoat and a paper of paint, saying: "Sir, this mode will be dangerous, but, if you dare be desperate, here are the means of disguising yourself: I will return in the twilight." He did come back at dusk, and found

[1] I find in Martinien's *Liste des officiers tués et blessés pendant les Guerres de l'Empire* that the *chef de bataillon*, L'Astruc, of the 64th Line, was killed at Albuera. This is, no doubt, the officer in question.

me ready, dressed, and disguised with the paint, which, toned in colour with brick-dust from the walls, I had rubbed over my face and hands. I was fully determined to brave the danger of attempting to pass the guards in disguise. The Spaniard said that he would walk at some twenty yards in front of me, so that if we were detected and fired at, one of the two might have a chance of escaping in the scuffle.

We then passed from my cell through a small room, where six British officers were confined—a room full of vermin and filth, with old, rotten beds and coarse, dirty sheets. Five sentries kept guard here—one at each window, another in the centre of the passage, and a fifth at the outward door of the corridor. There was also a strong officer's guard at the outer gate. All of these posts I had to pass, being several times obliged to put my hand gently against the sentry, to make him give way to let me pass. On my arrival in the open street a delightful object met my view in the fine red rays of a departing sun. My protector stopped, to let me come up with him, and then, in the Italian language, began to abuse the people of the prison for having charged so unreasonably high for the wine we had been drinking there. This was said with the intention of lulling suspicion in the soldiers who were loitering at the gate.

My preserver led me through many by-ways, in which we met French officers and soldiers innumerable, and at last took me to the door of a garden, which he threw open. We entered; it was spacious and well planted with trees and flowers. I seated myself snug under a palm-tree, where he desired me to rest, while he went in to see if all were safe in his own house. Here I sat quiet till eleven o'clock, when he returned, and conducted me to his abode, where I found his wife ready to welcome me with a good supper. But my heart was too light and happy to care much for food, and my mind so fixed on flight to the mountains that at this moment I almost fancied that I could have flown over them like an eagle. I was extremely eager to go forward

at once, but my preserver alleged that it would take time to fix me a route, by learning in what direction the French troops were least numerous. He must also obtain me a guide. Thus two days ran by, during which I learned that the French governor had offered for my detection 5,000 reals, and a place under Government to the informer, as also the promise of immunity from punishment to those concerned in my escape, if they would surrender me. My friend feared that a search might be made in suspected houses, and prepared for it, by arranging with his neighbours right and left, that I should be passed on to one of their roofs if the French came to his door.

July 27th. This day my deliverer brought to me a trusty and singularly clever man, who spoke several languages, and knew the different passes of the mountains very well. But, to my great surprise and disapprobation, this guide refused to stir before Sunday night. I argued, but all in vain. Superstition led him to think the first part of my escape miraculous, and his mind dictated to him a move on the Holy Day and no other. From this cause I shall name him Don Sunday. He was possessed with numerous excellent qualities, and had that happy manner, which attends some persons, of pleasing all men with whom they have intercourse. His superstition was extreme: and the manner in which he related my escape astonished not only the ignorant, but many intelligent persons during our journey: in some instances, I believe, it induced strangers to show us a civility which we should not have had without the story,

The good woman of the house and Don Sunday made ready what we thought was best calculated for travellers in this burning weather. A quantity of bread in small rolls, a number of hard-boiled eggs, some cow-heels with the bones taken out, and some undressed ham, to carry which a large wallet was purchased. Don Sunday also procured, as a deception, a quantity of brass and iron wire, with a small hammer and gimlets, as if to rivet china.

July 28th, Sunday. I was dressed as a Spanish traveller, in the same cloak and hat in which I had quitted the prison, and after having taken leave of my deliverer and his wife, started off with a light heart, while my guide threw the wallet across his shoulders. We passed both the guard at the city gate and also that on the river without any notice taken. Having crossed the Guadalquivir, we left the main road and pursued our way close along the banks. After some time we found an immense thicket, in which we took up our abode for the night. I never slept more soundly. At break of day we left our lair to the quiet possession of the foxes, who were as thick there as rabbits in a warren.

July 29th. We proceeded on our journey to a town called Alcala de Rio, and I assure you we were not remiss in keeping a look round about us from every rising ground. Having arrived near the town, I rested in an orange grove, exhausted from the pain of my wound and unaccustomed walking, while Don Sunday went to learn if the French were about. He returned shortly with two young men, who told us that there was a detachment in the town at the moment. They said that the French had just taken a young Spaniard, who had given information to the Spanish army, and had shot him in the street. They believed the French were still in the town; but other persons coming up said that they had departed half an hour before we arrived. This enabled us to go to the town: I had a letter for a Spanish gentleman there from my friend at Seville. I readily found him: he offered at once all his house afforded, and inquired my plans. I told him I was going straight to the mountains, which he thought the best means of security. Taking us to the back of his house, he pointed with his finger to a certain spot in the mountains, and bade me go to it, as we should there find a shepherd's hut where we might rest safely for the night.

All the afternoon we walked over an interminable plain, till we reached the foot of the hills, at a point where a small, beautiful river ran out of them. By its bank was a little hut, with a spring and garden. On entering we

found it inhabited by a well-dressed negro and a Spanish boy, whom we asked for water. It was brought us by the black, who seemed to me to have been a gentleman's servant. We sat for some time under the shadow of a tree. While resting there we saw a gentleman on horseback ride up. He addressed me; but as I could not perfectly understand him, I signed to Don Sunday, with whom he continued his conversation. He said: "I perceive the gentleman you are guiding is an Englishman. I have followed you from Alcala at a distance, in order to prevent you losing your way: you might easily go to the farm-houses on the right, instead of to the hut on the verge of the hills, to which I will conduct you myself." As we had a steep climb before us, and I was much fatigued, he insisted on my riding his horse; while he with Don Sunday took a short cut through a wood, and arrived a few moments before I reached the hut by way of the track. The first thing which attracted my curiosity was ten or twelve large dogs, somewhat like English lurchers. Some of them appeared half starved; but they behaved handsomely enough to me—not even barking. This I attribute to their master's having taken me by the hand to welcome me at his hut door, for I saw afterwards that they were confoundedly cross to other passers-by. The shepherds paid me every attention. At first they appeared afraid to speak; but putting down a dollar I soon found a ready passport to their civilities.

The hut was twelve feet square, built with rough stone, and thatched with reed. The floor was bare rock, and the only furniture a wooden bowl and two large pots. Supported by rush ropes there hung from the roof many shepherd's crooks, and long poles shod with iron at the smaller end. They prepared the best bed they could for us, by laying down sheepskins in a corner. The gentleman who had guided us shook me by the hand, wished me every happiness and a safe journey, and departed. I lay down to rest; but the floor was so uneven, and my body so fatigued, that I was obliged to refresh myself with some wine and bread before slumber found me.

July 30th. I slept till after daylight, and was awoke by Don Sunday in a terrible fright. He said: "Sir, we are likely to be taken. There is a troop of horse formed in the valley, about three or four hundred yards from this hut." This sudden intelligence alarmed me a good deal; but I recollected that the gentleman who had attended us yesterday had told us that some Spanish cavalry, who frequented the mountains, often called at this shepherd's hut, and thence sent down men for any article they wanted in the town. Nevertheless, it was equally possible that the horsemen might be French; so we ran out of the hut. Don Sunday sneaked, like an old fox, up the side of the hill; I went down the valley on the opposite side. Turning, I saw Don Sunday lay hold of the bough of a tree, and run his hand along it till he got above a large furze-bush, into the middle of which he dropped himself. This bush was, I do suppose, twelve feet high and about the same number of yards round. Here he remained in quiet, and might have held out a siege for three or four days, being well provisioned for that time by means of our wallet. The shepherds, concluding the troops to be French, were flying up the mountain-side, and their dogs with them. I, for my part, ran to the oak thicket in the valley, and crept among the boughs, closely interwoven one with another, till the oak-leaves covered me and my hat. From this lair I curiously watched the dragoons, who climbed the opposite side of the hill, explored the hut, and found it empty, and then rode down the valley in which I lay concealed. Here they halted, and, alighting from their horses, some tied them to trees, others hobbling their forefeet with ropes and letting them graze. Some horses were actually fastened to the outer boughs of the bush in which I was concealed.

The horsemen were, fortunately, Spanish dragoons. The shepherds on the mountain-side soon detected this, and ran down to converse with the officers. One shepherd, approaching the place of my concealment, shouted that these were friends, and that I need not fear them. But on attempting to emerge, I found that I had got so far

under the matted boughs that they would not admit of my rising, nor could I creep out head first! I had to return again by the way I had got in. I struggled backwards for some time, but was at last obliged to call the shepherd to my aid, who not only came himself but brought the Spanish officers, who had a hearty laugh at my confinement. With great difficulty they removed the boughs and set me at liberty.

My own mind being relieved from anxiety, I began to think of Don Sunday, and with the three Spanish officers went in search of him. Reaching his furze-bush, I called and he answered from the midst, complaining bitterly of the thorns he had to encounter, which encompassed him so sadly on all sides that without assistance he was afraid to move. The shepherds with their long poles cleared a passage and set the poor Don at liberty. He told the officers who I was, and the story of my escape from Seville. They appeared much astonished and interested, and promised me their protection and convoy through the mountains. They purposed sending down into the town for some things that they wanted. We sat down on the grass, and, while we waited, the officers partook of some of my provisions and wine. It was late before the messengers returned, and we slept on sheepskins in the hut that night.

July 31*st*. Early in the morning we proceeded on the road for Castelblanco. The officers provided me with a capital horse, while Don Sunday trudged on foot. Nothing occurred during this day, but we now and then heard distant firing by the guerrillas towards the Seville road. We reached Castelblanco early in the day. Here the dragoons provided me with a good mule and my guide with another. Passing through El Ronquillo we continued our route, which was a long one, for Castillo de las Guardias. We reached it late at night, avoiding entering the village, and slept in the woods.

August 1*st*. We started at daybreak for the Rio Tinto. For two days we had felt the climate very different from that of Seville, where nature had been exhausted by an

early spring and the burning sun, which had turned every blade of grass brown. Here in the mountains this was not the case. Innumerable uncultivated flowers seemed to vie with each other in beauty, and wherever I turned my eyes I saw in perfection the works of the all-bountiful Creator. Had an atheist been there, he would have been ashamed to say that all this beauty came by chance alone. All the later shrubs of the mountains were in bloom; bright colours were interwoven through every bush.

August 2nd. Still through the mountains to Zalamea, amid scenery similar to that of yesterday. We passed many fine streams which, from the quietude, were crowded with small fish: they seemed delighted at seeing our horses drink, instead of flying from them, as would have been the case in a more cultivated country.

August 3rd. We continued our journey through bushes and goat-walks. I believe it was on the evening of this day that we had to cross the main road from Seville to the north.[1] On it we discovered a French convoy of 30 wagons, 250 infantry, and 30 cavalry. To avoid them we fell back about a league. They, however, were much more alarmed at the few Spanish dragoons than we were at them. They thought us to be the vedettes of Ballasteros's army, a part of which might be waiting to surprise them. They had ordered quarters in a village, but on sight of our party packed up, and made a forced march all night.

August 4th. Past a most intricate mill-dam on our road to Calende d'Alosno. The whole of this day was through bad roads and difficult passes. Our mid-day halt at a shepherd's hut, where I got two girls to wash my shirt for me. I gave them a shilling (4 reals): they had never before, to show the poverty of the lower orders in Spain, been mistresses of a whole shilling in their lives. We frequently came on the shepherds during this march.

[1] This date is almost certainly an error. The main road from Seville, which the party had to cross on their journey westward, was that by El Ronquillo, Sta Olalla, and Monasterio, which they crossed on July 31st, before reaching Castillo de las Guardias. It was probably on this day that they saw the French convoy.

Usually we saw father and mother and five or six children sitting round a large wooden bowl, into which they were dipping their fingers and feeding all together. Their pottage appeared to be a mixture of herbs and roots boiled together, with red herring to flavour it. No chairs, tables, or furniture of any description. Very marked is the difference between rich and poor in Spain, for the higher orders have houses fitted up in the most beautiful manner, with expensive furniture and every luxury.

This day we passed through the copper-mines of Rio Tinto, which are well worth notice. The copper is taken out of the side of an exceedingly high mountain, the body of which is supposed to contain nothing else. The miners are at present in a state of idleness, as they refuse to work for the French, and fly to the mountains when a column approaches.[1]

In the evening we arrived at Villa Blanca. Here a captain, belonging to Ballasteros's army, was waiting to put under arrest one of the three lieutenants who had been with me through the mountains. Having read aloud Ballasteros's letter, he desired the lieutenant to pull off his coat. He then tied his hands behind him with a common rope, and put handcuffs on. He also ordered several of the dragoons to be arrested, and their accoutrements were stripped off in the market-place. I understood the cause of the arrest was that this lieutenant had left his quarters without orders for the expedition through the mountains, and it had been supposed that he and his dragoons had deserted. The guard produced a long, thick rope and some smaller cords, with which they fastened the hands of the lieutenant and the other prisoners, one on the right and another on the left, by which means the large rope was carried between them. In this situation they had to walk two and two through the heat of the sun to Ayamonte.

[1] Again an error of memory in dating comes in. The Rio Tinto mines cannot have been passed on the same day that the party reached Villa Blanca, but must have excited Brooke's attention on the 2nd, as they are close to Zalamea, and forty miles as the crow flies from Villa Blanca.

An inhabitant called to me: "God bless the English and their laws! Chains and tortures are not known in your blessed country."

Villa Blanca was full of Ballasteros's soldiers, who took the opportunity of stealing all they could lay their hands on. Don Sunday, whom I do believe to have been as watchful as most men, turned his back but for one minute, and in it they stole his wallet and my cloak. The old lad, missing them, set up a terrible shout, crying aloud: "I am robbed, I am robbed!" A Spanish officer inquired the cause of his outcry: the Don fully described the articles stolen, and the officer passing down the street saw a soldier offering my cloak for sale; we got it back, but lost the wallet with the food and the wire, hammer, gimlets, and riveting tools.

August 5th. To Ayamonte, the seaport at the mouth of the Guadiana, built under the side of a hill, with a strong fort and castle commanding it. On the opposite side is the delightful island of Villa Real, belonging to Portugal. From Ayamonte you may take shipping to any part of Europe, and can hire small vessels at short notice, to coast along the neighbouring country. But I determined to pass by land over the Portuguese mountains, to join the British army, and must beg your patience to follow me a little longer.

Here I bid farewell to Spain, with all its beauties: many excellent qualities do its people possess, and they are highly entitled to my gratitude, for the kindness they showed to me and other British prisoners. I regret and lament the present state of their unfortunate country, and most sincerely do I wish them a speedy deliverance from their oppressors, the French.

August 6th. I thought that the most speedy way of joining the British army, which lay at this moment at Villa Viciosa, was to ascend the Guadiana as far as it was navigable, and then strike over the hills. I desired Don Sunday to hire a boat to convey us up the river to San Lucar de Guadiana, which would save us a long land

journey. He went out, and returned to say that he could find none, which I did not believe, as it had occurred to me that he was wishing to spend a day or two at Ayamonte, with some old acquaintances that he had found. So I went out myself, and hired a boat with no difficulty. It was deeply laden with flour and other stuff for San Lucar. We went off with a fair wind, and sailed many miles, till at a narrow part of the river the wind slackened and we were becalmed. Here we were passed by a rowing-boat going extremely fast: as it went by, a gentleman called to me from it and said: "I perceive, sir, you are an English officer. I am a king's messenger from Cadiz: if you will accept a seat in my boat I can get you to Mertola very quick." I took his kind offer, and we proceeded up the river for a long distance, till, the rowers being fatigued, we stopped at a farmhouse. While we were taking milk and refreshments, a decently dressed man came up and said: "I understand, sir, that you are an English officer who have made your escape from Seville; probably you are in want of money, and I can readily supply you with some, if you want it, or find you anything else you require." This was the magistrate of the district: I told him with thanks I was well provided for my journey. Putting off, we rowed till night overtook us.

August 7th. Reached Mertola about ten in the morning, the end of our river journey. Called on the magistrate (Juiz de Fora) for a billet, and got a good one. A priest asked me out to a most excellent dinner. He was a very superstitious man: Don Sunday took advantage of the failing in this truly good ecclesiastic, and told him such a version of my escape as was so miraculous that it could not be accounted for by any power below. The priest paid me very great attentions, and wept when we parted. We got mules at Mertola with no trouble.

August 8th. Left my kind entertainers in Mertola, and proceeded along the high-road to Beja, the only great public road which we had used since leaving Seville. It was tolerably good, and all the day we proceeded over

a variety of hill and dale. These hills afford shelter for all kinds of game. In every little spot that was free from bushes we noticed hares, rabbits, and partridges innumerable.

The people in these mountains are, if possible, more ignorant than those of Spain. From the extreme plenty which surrounds them in herbs and game of every kind, they have become so idle that they have no other ideas but those of the pleasures of the day. It is a wretched land of idleness and sloth: they are very filthy in their persons, and I fancy the man who should venture to offer small-tooth combs to any of the females would be forbidden to travel that way again, as this machine would deprive them of a cherished daily amusement.

Reached Beja at night, a town situated on a hill in the midst of a plain. From nature it derives many advantages, and might be made a very strong place. I should think this had been the case years back; but the works are going fast to decay, the angles are defenceless, and not a gun is mounted on the bastions.

August 9th. From Beja, past Vidigueira, to Monte de Trigo,[1] through a most romantic fine country, well wooded. Coming to the brow of the hill, I discovered a wild fire running rapidly along the forest below for many thousand acres. I was sorry to see a number of birds of different kinds foolishly hovering over the flames, so low that their wings caught and they fell into it. Don Sunday told me afterwards that he had seen the bodies of partridges singed and roasted by the fire. I think the devastation had been caused by careless persons lighting a fire by the road-side, to cook their food. We left it burning furiously, and felt better contented when completely out of view of it.

[1] I am inclined to think that Brooke has here made one stage of two, as Monte de Trigo is no less than forty miles from Beja, which seems an incredibly long journey, when the mountains are taken into consideration. He calls the stage nine leagues in an analysis of his itinerary appended at the close of his Journal, but it is far more.

We spent the night in trying to sleep, at a carrier's house on the verge of a wood. Slumber was rendered impossible by the brawls and scuffling of a party of pedlars and muleteers, quarrelling over some stolen wine. They fought broadcast with fists and staves: I found Don Sunday lying at full length in a corner, to keep out of the way of the unruly combat.

August 10th. Rode to Villa Viciosa, the headquarters of my division, now under the command of General Hill.[1] I went immediately to his quarters; he had gone to rest, but his brother, Captain Clement Hill, knew my voice at the door, was much surprised, and called me in, to ask how I had escaped. He would not think of my going to any other quarters. I settled with the General for four days. Next morning I had the pleasure of meeting him. He showed me every mark of kindness, and sent for medical men, who found my wounds in such an alarming state that they advised I should go to England.

August 14th. Parted with the General on this morning. He attended me out on my road, and gave me at parting a basket with tea, sugar, bread, butter, and a large venison pasty. I was provided with mules by Commissary Brooke.

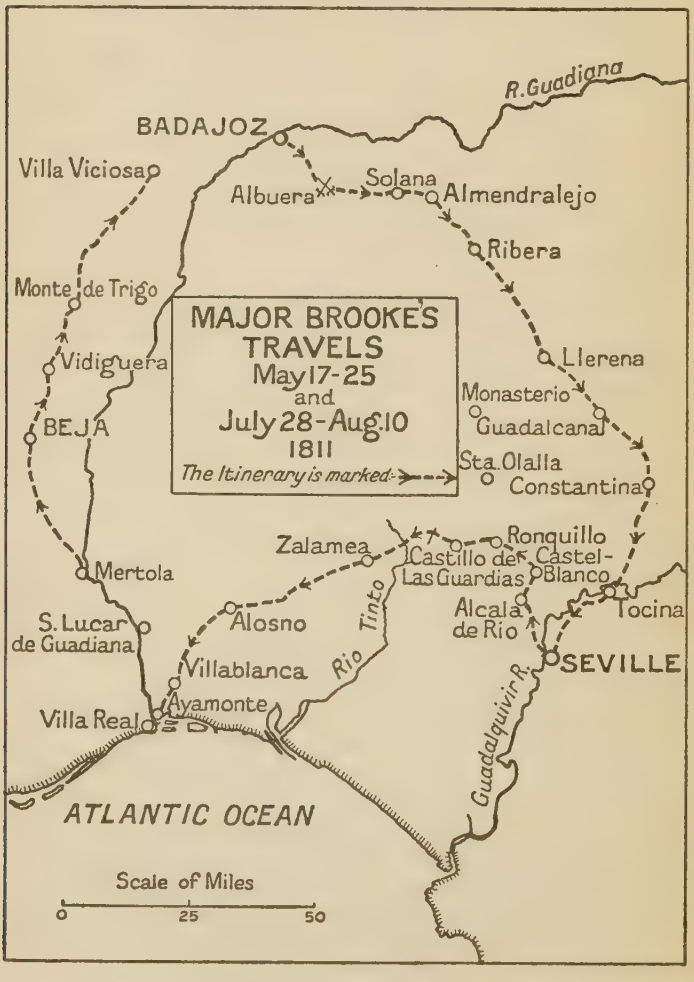
August 18th. Reached Aldea Gallega, where Mr. Moore of the Commissarat Department insisted on my dining with him, and sent me over to Lisbon in his own boat.

August 19th. The pains in my head had increased very much. On arriving at Lisbon I waited on the Medical Board, who passed me without delay for England. But before leaving I received Lord Wellington's permission to proceed immediately to my native country.

August 27th. Embarked on board the *Champion* transport —Joseph Clinch, Master—and arrived at Portsmouth on September 28th, in a very bad state of health, both from the effects of fatigue and from many pieces of bone having sloughed out of my skull, both on my road through the

[1] Hill and the 2nd Division were at Villa Viciosa from July 30th to September 3, 1811, when they moved to Portalegre.

mountains and during my passage to England. I performed a journey of upwards of 400 miles in Spain and Portugal, but at last had the happiness of meeting my family and friends, whose anxiety and uncertainty as to my fate were relieved by my arrival in England.



XI

HOW GENERAL ISAAC BROCK SAVED CANADA

IT is not always by big battalions that the British Empire has been extended or preserved: nor have generals whose names are well remembered always been the saviours of the state. In 1912 we celebrated with justifiable pride the centenaries of Wellington's triumphs at Ciudad Rodrigo, at Badajoz, and at Salamanca, but how few of the subjects of George V on this side of the Atlantic remembered to praise the exploits of Isaac Brock and his gallant handful of British regulars and Canadian militia. We noticed no memorial of their triumphs at Detroit and by the Falls of Niagara, which saved—it is no exaggeration to say—British North America, and determined the future course of all its history. There was a moment, in the autumn of 1812, when nothing seemed more possible than the complete vanishing of the Union Jack from the great Western Continent.

The war of 1812–1815, between Great Britain and the United States, was one of the most dangerous crises of the British Empire. It ended in a compromise, and a restoration of the *status quo*, yet at its commencement its possibilities were incalculable. At the moment when President Madison declared war we were at the very crucial point of the great struggle with France. Our implacable enemy, Napoleon, had still an unshaken position—he had just marched out to his Russian expedition, but its disastrous termination was only foreseen by a very few long-sighted men. To the majority he still seemed a Colossus bestriding the Old World, and the stubborn resistance of Great Britain to his domination was regarded as forlorn

obstinacy by all the Whig politicians, who kept denouncing the Peninsular War as a failure, and Wellington as a venturesome general doomed to ultimate ruin. To such thinkers the declaration of war by the United States was the final blow which must overthrow the British Empire—the "stab in the back", as it was sometimes called, which must be fatal to the combatant whose whole attention was absorbed in the endless and exhausting struggle with Bonaparte.

There was much truth in this view. Looking back to the state of Canada in 1812, it does not seem unreasonable that the Americans should have considered it an easy prey, or that British statesmen should have feared that by the end of the year there would be nothing left unconquered save Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. The United States had a compact population of seven millions at this time: in Lower Canada there were no more than 300,000 British subjects, and they mostly of French origin. In the newly settled Upper Canada there were but 80,000 souls scattered in the wilderness. The military possibilities of defence seemed hopeless. The Ministry at home had made up their minds that war might be averted, as it had been for the last six years, by prolonged negotiations, and by concessions to the Americans whenever their attitude became threatening. In 1811 they had adopted a pacific policy, and shown signs of yielding whenever pressed. That war would come at last they had not thought likely: the government of the United States had possessed a good *casus belli* against Great Britain, and an equally good one against France, ever since the issue of the Berlin Decrees and the retaliatory "Orders in Council". That President Madison would suddenly strike, when all endeavours were being made to conciliate him, had till the last moment been considered improbable. Hence no efforts had been made to reinforce the garrison of Canada, which was at its lowest peace strength. To defend 1,600 miles of frontier there were in July 1812 just four battalions of regular troops (the 8th, 41st, 49th, and 100th regiments),

one Veteran Battalion, another of permanent local troops called the Newfoundland Regiment, and two or three companies of artillery. The whole amounted to no more than 4,450 men, scattered in forts and posts from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to Saint-Joseph on Lake Huron. This contemptible total could not be raised to a higher figure for many months, in those days of sailing-ships and slow communications. It would be far into the autumn before the few battalions that could be spared from the West Indies or Bermuda would appear—to send troops from Home would take longer still, and Great Britain was at this time almost drained dry of regular battalions; the last reinforcements to Wellington in Spain had brought the domestic garrison lower than it had been for many a year. It was small wonder, therefore, that President Madison and the war-party in the United States considered that Canada was to be had for the taking, if only they chose to stretch forth the armed hand. They had disregarded the protests of a strong opposition, which included nearly all the New England States, because they thought that success was inevitable, and that criticism would be silenced by the tidings that York, Montreal, and Quebec had all fallen before the first advance of their armies. Well aware of the weakness of their enemy, they forgot their own drawbacks, and John Calhoun, the eloquent congressman from South Carolina, was only voicing the general opinion of the war-party when he assumed the prophetic mantle and assured the nation that "in four weeks from the time that a declaration of war is heard on our frontiers, the whole of Upper and a great part of Lower Canada will be in our possession".

The boast sounds like mere "spread-eagle" bombast when subsequent events are considered: but there was more in it than might be conceded by those who are merely wise after the event. The President and his party had been making their preparations; they had, six months before the war began, passed a Bill for raising 25,000 additional regular troops, and the new regiments were already mustering.

In April, Congress had authorized the President to call out 100,000 State Militia if war should be declared. In May—a month before the British Minister was sent away from Washington—an army had begun to move up to the farther end of Lake Erie to outflank the British line of defence in Upper Canada. It was ready to strike when the signal came, and meanwhile the Governor at Quebec, Sir George Prevost, was wholly unable to make up his mind whether hostilities were probable or not, and was continually receiving dispatches from London to inform him that all endeavours were being made to avert a breach with the United States by means of concessions, and that meanwhile no reinforcements were being got ready for his benefit. When one Government is secretly resolved to force on war, and the other doubts of the reality of the danger, and makes no adequate preparation to meet it, the party which knows its own mind has an immense advantage.

That Upper Canada was not overrun by the Americans immediately after the declaration of war on June 18, 1812, was due, humanly speaking, to three things. The first was that President Madison and his military advisers appear to have been wholly ignorant of the fact that large numbers of men collected at various distant points, unprovided with transport, and mostly untrained to arms, cannot be made into a field army at a moment's notice by a dispatch from headquarters. The second was that the militia of Canada, whose very existence the Americans had ignored in their schemes of conquest, and whose construction and equipment were as sketchy as that of the levies opposed to them, turned out to be a formidable fighting force, despite of their very modest strength. The third, and to us the most interesting point of the three, was that Upper Canada was at this moment in charge of a soldier of true military genius, one of those unsuspected leaders of men whom an emergency sometimes calls to light—Major-General Isaac Brock.

That Brock was a capable man, and an officer who knew how to make himself loved by his troops, was known to

every one who had come into contact with him. That he was a heaven-sent strategist, a true organizer of victory, was a fact that could only emerge on the crucial occasion when he was put to the test. His career down to 1812 had given him no chance of showing the heights to which he could rise in the moment of necessity. Born of an old Guernsey stock in 1769—in the same twelvemonth that saw both Napoleon and Wellington ushered into the world—he had joined the 8th Foot as an ensign in 1785, when he was but sixteen. But the chances of regimental service in that corps and in the 49th—into which he exchanged in 1791—had not permitted him to hear a shot fired in anger till 1799. He missed all the early years of the French Revolutionary War, and saw his first campaign in the Duke of York's disastrous and ill-managed invasion of North Holland. He was, however, one of the few officers who emerged with an enhanced reputation from that miserable business, and when he came to command the 49th as Lieutenant-Colonel, it was said of him by the Commander-in-Chief that he had made one of the worst battalions in the service into one of the best. After the Dutch campaign he only once again went on active service before 1812, his regiment having been told off to serve as marines on board Sir Hyde Parker's fleet in the spring of 1801. Thus he was present on board the *Ganges* at Nelson's bombardment of Copenhagen, in which engagement his men, scattered among various line-of-battle ships, lost eight killed and twenty wounded. But there was little opportunity for a colonel to distinguish himself in this contest of ships and batteries.

In 1802 the 49th were sent out to Canada, and there abode for the next thirteen years. This was absolutely the only part of the British Empire where, during the great war with Napoleon, a regiment had no chance of seeing active service. Colonel Brock therefore had, during the best years of his ripe manhood, no opportunity to show his military ability. His battalion was told off to the Upper Province, and was scattered in detachments over several

forts and outposts, separated from each other by hundreds of miles—a condition of affairs that told terribly against regimental efficiency. The Colonel had always to be on the move, and never saw his whole ten companies assembled together on parade. On one occasion he had to quell by his sudden appearance a dangerous mutiny, caused by the senseless and capricious severity of his second-in-command, who had been left alone for some months in charge of the detachment stationed at Fort George, on the Straits of Niagara. The men had plotted to shoot their tyrant, and to abscond in a body to the opposite American shore. Fortunately Brock heard rumours of the prevailing discontent at his distant headquarters, and hurried up from York (the modern Toronto) just in time to prevent the outbreak and to arrest the ringleaders. He came accompanied by his sergeant-major alone, but his mere presence sufficed to render impossible a crime which would have left a very black spot on the history of the British Army.

Brock became a brigadier in 1808 and a major-general in June 1811: three months later he received a very honourable and arduous commission, which gave him a civil as well as a military status, by being made "President and Administrator of the Government of Upper Canada". This appointment was one of the most profitable nominations ever made in the *London Gazette*, since it put the right man in the right place, just nine months before the crisis which was to arise from the outbreak of war with the United States in June 1812. Brock was given time to settle himself into the saddle, and to familiarize himself with his duties and his responsibilities before the time of trial came. He was already, from ten years' residence in Canada, well acquainted with all the leading men of the Upper Province, official and non-official. He knew the land and waterways by which its thinly scattered population communicated with each other. He could gauge exactly its very limited resources in men and money. He could tell where he might expect apathy and where enthusiastic support, when the time of trouble should arrive. Best of all, he had time to impress

his own cheery, energetic, resourceful temperament on those who were about him.

All accounts agree that Isaac Brock had a most dominating personality. He was now in his forty-third year, in the full vigour of robust middle age. He was of commanding stature, not less than six feet two inches in height, and was correspondingly broad-built. But he was neither heavy nor ungainly. In his youth he had been a noted boxer and swimmer; he was still a great athlete, capable of any endurance of fatigue, on foot or on horseback—though it was not always easy to find a charger up to his weight. He was of a fair and florid complexion, with a high forehead, a full face, a small mouth, and very lively and restless grey-blue eyes. Several of those who knew him note the habitual cheerfulness of his demeanour, and his winning smile. "His manners were courteous, frank, and engaging", says one biographer; "in converse he was exceedingly affable and gentlemanly", says another, "of a cheerful and social habit, partial to dancing, and (though he was never married) extremely sensible to the charms of female society." A third speaks of him as having "a commanding bearing but a gentle manner—irreproachable in private life, universally respected by those who did not personally know him, and loved by those who did". One of the best monuments to his memory is the string of anecdotes concerning his thoughtful kindness, in the Memoirs of his favourite sergeant-major James Fitzgibbon, who by his patronage was promoted to a commission, and became one of the best and most daring leaders of light troops in the oncoming war.

Such a chief as Brock was much needed on the frontier in 1812, for his superior, the Governor-General at Quebec, Sir George Prevost, was not the man to save an empire. A politician rather than a soldier, irresolute and downhearted, with no confidence in himself and small military skill, he might have lost Canada if he had not been blessed with vigorous subordinates. His only saving virtue was that, as American-born and of French descent, he was popular among the *habitans* of the province of Quebec, whom he

managed with some skill, and who followed him with more loyalty than they might, perhaps, have shown to an unsympathetic English governor. But he was no great strategist, and ended his career by a failure so tiresome that he was superseded and sent home to England to be tried by court-martial. He died just after the war had ended, a few days before the date appointed for his trial. Anything might have happened in 1812, if Prevost had been represented in the Upper Province by a lieutenant no more capable than himself.

When the Americans declared war in June, and proceeded a few days later to cross the Canadian frontier, Brock had only 1,500 regular troops under his command—one complete battalion, the 41st Foot, 900 strong, and five companies each of the 10th Veteran Battalion and the Newfoundland Regiment, with one company of field artillery. His own loved 49th Foot was at this time at Montreal, in the Lower Province, and not at his disposition. To defend 1,300 miles of frontier, on lake and land, with this handful of regulars would have been impossible even to a man of Brock's energy. His one hope lay in the newly organized local militia, with which he had to supplement his British troops. From the first threatenings of war onward, he had been hard at work in constructing *cadres* for the new battalions and companies, choosing officers for them, and indenting at Quebec for arms and ammunition. Fortunately the great bulk of the population with which he had to deal was loyal and trustworthy, and responded eagerly to his call. There were but 80,000 souls in all within the province, and he could not hope to embody more than 4,000 or 5,000 men at the best. But Upper Canada had been originally settled with the exiled "United Empire Loyalists", the gallant remnant of the "Tory" party in the revolted American Colonies, who, in 1783, had preferred to follow the old flag to a strange land rather than to accept citizenship of the United States. The memory of their bitter strife with the Republican party during the Revolutionary War, and of the cruelty and insult with

which they had been treated in the hour of defeat, was still strong in the old generation, and their children had been brought up to hate the Stars and Stripes, and the much-abused name of Liberty, with a perfect hatred. King George had no more loyal subjects than the descendants of the heroic emigrants who had pitched their habitation in the remote unsettled North, and had hewn out their clearings in the wilderness. The call to resist American invasion was welcomed without hesitation by the bulk of the population of the province. It was true that there were weak points—the French or half-French hunters and fishers along the western lakes, who clustered particularly thick on the peninsula facing Detroit, were little interested in the strife between two sets of English-speaking aliens, and were rather inclined to take a neutral attitude. In this same direction there were also a certain amount of American settlers, who had drifted in from Ohio, and who were of course in sympathy with their brethren across the border. Hence the militia levy of the county of Essex, the extreme western district of the Upper Province, was unsatisfactory to a great extent. On the other hand, the people of the counties more to the east, about the Niagara Peninsula, and the newly settled towns of York and Kingston, were enthusiastic loyalists, and gave all the help that Brock demanded, even raising for him (what could hardly have been expected) some troops of cavalry, and a volunteer battery of light artillery. Of this the men and horses were drawn from a transport column, the "Car Brigade", whose members insisted on taking a more active part than that of wagoners in the strife. The militia out of whom the General got most service were those of the three counties of York, Lincoln, and Norfolk, on the Niagara frontier. But those of Stormont, Glengarry, Dundas, and the other eastern counties of the Upper Province, were all doing good duty in watching the line of the St. Lawrence, between Kingston and Montreal.

The calling out of the militia was made under every possible drawback. "The King's stores", wrote Brock to

Prevost, "are now at so low an ebb that they can scarcely furnish any article of use or comfort. Blankets, hammocks, and kettles are all to be purchased: the troops watching the banks of the river (St. Lawrence) stand in the utmost need of tents." The only means to pay the embodied militia was by a local paper currency. Uniforms had only been provided in full for the flank companies: of the rest, many had to turn out in such short round dark jackets as they could procure. But uniforms matter little when the spirit is willing. Of the 4,000 militia of the Upper Province only about a third were raised in its western half, where Brock's operations were to take place, along the lakes of Ontario and Erie: the rest belonged to the eastern counties, and were too far off to be available: indeed, their duty lay rather in the Montreal region and along the Upper St. Lawrence. The total force on which the Governor could reckon on the Niagara and Detroit frontiers, counting regulars and militia together, was about 2,700 men.

He also had, for what it was worth, the support of the thinly scattered Indian tribes of the North-West, auxiliaries very useful for irregular fighting but most untrustworthy, who never appeared at any one place with more than 600 warriors. Usually they came in the greatest numbers when they were least wanted, and dwindled down to a few scores just when their services would have been most essential. They could not be trusted in the open, or in the attack or defence of entrenchments. They often disobeyed orders: and they caused infinite dismay and anger to their allies by their proneness to massacre the wounded and prisoners, whenever a sharp eye was not kept upon them. That any service was got out of them at all was mainly due to the celebrated Shawnee chief Tecumseh, one of the few masterful personalities who emerged on the Indian side during the long strife between red men and white in the West. Driven out of the lands along the Wabash by the Americans, he had sought refuge in Upper Canada with the remnant of his tribe, and placed himself at the disposition of the British. His own followers were few, but he exercised a

considerable if intermittent authority over other tribes by virtue of his personal qualities. Not only a great scout and warrior but an orator and a diplomatist, he was admired by the red men, because he taught them to combine and to sink their old feuds, but still more by the white, because he possessed the virtues, unusual in an Indian chief, of strict adherence to his pledged word, and of a humanity that-was absolutely unknown to his fellows. Having once promised Brock that his men should spare the lives of prisoners, he did his best to enforce the rule: he was seen on one occasion to dash out the brains of a warrior whom he caught mutilating a wounded American soldier. But Tecumseh could not be everywhere at once: he was but the chief of a broken tribe, and when he was not present his feckless fellow-countrymen were all too prone to melt away homeward with their plunder, to fall to the fire-water and remain in a state of hopeless intoxication for days on end, or to disappear after a slight reverse, or the refusal of some preposterous petition. The real use of the Indians to Brock was mainly that their presence in the woods, and the knowledge of the atrocities of which they were capable, made the Americans very loth to move save in large parties, hindered all scouting by the invaders, and made them very cautious and circumspect. The terror caused by the lurking red man was a more useful asset to the British than his actual achievements in the field. If Brock once or twice had 500 or 600 Indians in his camp, it was quite as common for him to find that they had mostly disappeared when they were specially wanted, and that only the trusty Tecumseh and some few scores remained available.

On June 18, 1812, President Madison had declared war on Great Britain. The news reached the Governor-General at Quebec on the 25th, but Brock had it a day earlier, on the 24th, by private letters from New York, and so was enabled to make up his plan of campaign some days before he received any communication from his chief. To the Americans at the western end of the lakes it came

even more slowly—General Hull at Detroit got it only on July 2nd, eight days after Brock had his notice.

Hull's force, on the extreme right flank of Upper Canada, was the only one ready for immediate action—it had been waiting the word to move for some days. On July 12th it had crossed the Detroit river and occupied Sandwich on the British shore. On the Niagara frontier, at the eastern end of Lake Erie, there was an assembly of New York State Militia under General van Rensselaer, but it was not ready to move, having to wait for a brigade of regular troops and other reinforcements. After another interval, beyond the other end of Lake Ontario, the American Commander-in-Chief, Dearborn, was collecting what he intended to be his main army, for an advance against Montreal. President Madison had made the mistake of declaring war before he was ready—underestimating with the optimism of a civilian the time that it would take to assemble and organize the numerous but scattered resources at his disposal. It must be confessed that he was ill-served by the military men whom he had taken as his advisers—his senior officer, Dearborn, was most of all a master of procrastination and indecision. As an American historian has observed: "Madison's orders to Hull and Dearborn passed beyond the bounds of ordinary incapacity, but Dearborn's answers passed belief". Nevertheless, if only the necessary weeks for mobilization and concentration were granted them, the Americans could certainly pour overwhelming forces over the frontier, and bear down all opposition.

This Brock saw, and took at once the only course open to a soldier who has a small but trustworthy force under his hand, while his enemy is slowly collecting his far-superior resources. He would strike at once, to right and left, before the opponent is ready. But in this case the difficulties of striking were enormous: his scanty numbers were not gathered, and a "minimum garrison" had to be left in the forts which watched the waterways. There were three companies of the 41st at Fort Malden on the Detroit

river, four more at Fort George on the Niagara frontier. The central reserve, with which Brock proposed to transfer himself from one end to another of a line 600 miles long, for offensive purposes, consisted of two companies of the 41st and under 300 volunteers from the York Militia! And the movement of this force of about 400 men was to be in open boats, along a lake 257 miles long, hugging a shore often precipitous, with unsafe anchorage on a rocky bottom, and in a region noted for its summer storms. Nevertheless, Brock started off from York on August 6th, after having harangued and dissolved the legislature of Upper Canada. His speech ended with the stirring words:

"We are engaged in an awful and eventful contest. By unanimity and dispatch in our councils, and by vigour in our operations, we may teach the enemy this lesson, that a country defended by *free* men, enthusiastically devoted to the cause of their king and constitution, can never be conquered."

From the modest hall of the Provincial Assembly Brock hastened across the Niagara peninsula to the spot near the eastern end of Lake Erie where his boats were waiting for him, and in five days of difficult navigation, rendered miserable by much rain, brought his little flotilla to Fort Malden, where he was rejoiced to find the detachment of the 41st, under Colonel Proctor, still holding out. Things might have been otherwise, for the American Army of the West had now been a full month on Canadian soil. But General Hull, like his superior Dearborn, was a procrastinator. He only saw his own difficulties, not those of the enemy: he had started with over 2,000 men, one regiment of United States regulars, three of Ohio and one of Michigan militia. Opposite him there had been nothing save Proctor's three companies, a few hundred Indians, and the untrustworthy militia of Essex County, the one weak element in the local levy of the Upper Province, as we have already mentioned. The majority of them were either French-Canadians or Americans, and they had melted away from their officers save some few scores. Nevertheless, Proctor

made a show of defending the Rivière aux Canards, the marshy stream between Hull's position at Sandwich and his own at Fort Malden, though he knew that he must give way if he were attacked seriously. But the attack never came! Hull issued a verbose and magniloquent proclamation on the day of his crossing the frontier, in which he assured the inhabitants of Upper Canada that, "separated by an immense ocean from Great Britain, they had no share in her councils, no interest in her conduct. They were tendered the invaluable blessings of civil, political, and religious liberty, and their necessary results —individual and public prosperity. The arrival of an army of friends must be hailed with a cordial welcome, for it would emancipate them from tyranny and oppression, and restore them to the dignified status of freed men." This was all fine enough, but the General did not advance—he pleaded sickness among his men, shortage of stores, the want of heavy artillery, the need for awaiting the reinforcements which were moving up to him from Ohio, and he failed to give the decisive push forward, which must have been successful.

Presently Proctor, emboldened by seeing his adversary so dilatory and cautious, pushed small detachments across the Detroit river, to harass Hull by breaking his line of communication with Ohio. On August 5th, an Indian band headed by Tecumseh cut up a large American party moving out to bring in a convoy. Using as his excuse the necessity for reopening the road, Hull moved back into Michigan three days later, and settled down under the guns of Fort Detroit—so ended the invasion of Canada! He made on August 8th an attempt to open up the southward road, but though he brushed away for a moment the trifling force which Proctor had sent over the water, he failed to get into communication with the friends with whom he was hoping to join hands.

Five days later General Brock and his little flotilla reached Amherstburg, the village below Fort Malden, and joined Proctor. He made but a short survey of the situa-

tion, but judging from general report, confirmed by some intercepted dispatches, that the enemy had a weak and downhearted general, and had lost all confidence in the success of their campaign, he resolved to attack at once. He knew that the number of the reinforcement which he had brought was overestimated, and that Hull had a vague belief that Indians in thousands were coming in for his extermination. Against such an opponent vigorous action, accompanied by any amount of preliminary "bluffing", was permissible. On August 15th Brock boldly sent in to Hull a summons to surrender Fort Detroit and his army, adding, with splendid mendacity, that the force at his disposal authorized a demand for instant submission. Hull sent the proper negative reply, but trembled at his own temerity. On the following morning Brock crossed the Detroit river with his whole disposable force—350 regulars, 400 militia, between 500 and 600 Indians—and advanced against the fort, driving in the American piquets. He had chosen a favourable moment. Four hundred of Hull's men, with his two best colonels, were out on an expedition in search of food. The fort was full of sick; the Michigan Militia had begun to desert: the General himself thought that he was in a helpless position. One of his officers describes him, while the redcoats were seen advancing: "He sat on an old tent on the ground, leaning his back against the rampart. He kept, apparently unconsciously, filling his mouth with tobacco, putting in quid after quid, till the spittle, coloured with juice, dribbled out on to his neck-cloth, cravat, and vest. He seemed preoccupied, his voice trembled, he was greatly agitated and anxious, believing that ultimately the fort would fall, and dreading massacre for all, including the many women and children in the place." Just as Brock had placed his men under cover, and had ascended the brow of a rising ground to reconnoitre the fort, he saw, to his intense surprise and glee, a white flag advancing from the side of the enemy. Hull was sending out word that he was prepared to surrender, in response to yesterday's summons! In consequence

the British took possession of the fort within an hour, and found that a force considerably larger than their own had surrendered to them. Hull had with him nearly 400 of the 4th United States regulars, a battery of regular artillery, some 300 Michigan militia, and 700 or 800 Ohio militia, with 33 guns. In addition, he—quite in the style of Dupont at Baylen—consented to include in his capitulation the large foraging party which was absent from the fort at the moment, and a small garrison which he had left at the river Raisin, a half-way house to his base in Ohio. Brock says in his dispatch that 2,500 Americans in all surrendered to him, but this must include many sick, and possibly the civil population, which had taken refuge in Detroit. The total of efficient fighting men seems to have been not more than 1,700.

The capitulation came just in time, for already heavy reinforcements for Hull were on their way from Ohio: the leading column of 2,500 regulars and militia, under General Winchester, would have been up to the fort in September, if it had not heard of the disaster at Detroit, and stayed its march. In short, if Brock had not seized the psychological moment for his bold advance, he would have been overwhelmed a few weeks later by forces three or four times outnumbering his own! But for the present the Detroit frontier was safe, and the victor could return to the other point of danger, the Niagara frontier, where—for all he knew—untoward events might have been happening during his absence. By August 20th he was at sea again on Lake Erie, bringing back with him the militia volunteers who had accompanied him to the West and part of the 41st Foot. By the 24th he was once more at Fort George, on the Niagara river. He found that in his absence Prevost and General Dearborn, two opponents who each realized his own weakness, and did not think of his adversary's straits, had concluded a truce, on the pretence that negotiations at Washington might yet lead to a peace. The delay was more profitable to the American, since his resources and reinforcements lay much closer

to hand than did those of the British general. When President Madison refused to ratify the suspension of arms, and declared the continuance of war inevitable, the American reserves had begun to come up, but Prevost had not yet received any reinforcements from England, nor could he do so for many a day.

On September 4th Brock received, at Kingston, the news that the truce was at an end, and two days later he was back on the Niagara frontier, preparing to receive the inevitable attack. He had at his disposition four companies of the 41st and six of the 49th, which Prevost had recently sent to him from the Lower Province, together with the militia of the counties of York, Lincoln, and Norfolk, the whole amounting to a little over 2,000 bayonets. In addition between 200 and 300 Indians had joined him. With this force he had to guard the whole length of the Niagara river, some thirty-six miles from lake to lake, of which only the central portion, along the precipices above and below the Great Falls, could be considered impracticable to the enemy. At each end of the broad river was a small British post, Fort George on Lake Ontario, Fort Erie on the lake of the same name. All save the small space covered by their guns had to be watched by Brock's little army. Opposite him the Americans had concentrated numbers rather more than double his own, including a brigade of 1,600 regulars under Major-General Alexander Smyth, at or near Buffalo, which faces Fort Erie across the water, and another regular regiment and some 2,300 New York Militia at Lewiston and Fort Niagara, at the other end of the river, below the Falls. Here the senior officer was Major-General Stephen van Rensselaer, commanding the New York contingent: the total force on the frontier was over 6,000 men. Fortunately for Brock, the two American generals were bitter enemies: they belonged to opposite political parties, and Smyth, as an officer of the regular army, treated Van Rensselaer, as a mere militia general, with contempt. They quarrelled as to the point at which it would be best to cross the Niagara river, each

holding that his own end of the line offered the best opportunities: Smyth would force a passage above the Falls, Van Rensselaer below.

Finally, as the autumn was wearing on, and the militia growing discontented and beginning to demand that they should either be employed in action or sent home for the winter, Van Rensselaer resolved that he would cross on his own responsibility. He was heartened up by a false report, brought by a spy, that Brock had again departed to Detroit. After an abortive attempt at a start on the night of October 10th, which miscarried owing to a blunder about guides and oars, he made his stroke after dark on the 12th, using his own division alone, though he had sent to Smyth what he in his dispatch calls "orders", but what Smyth treated as a negligible suggestion, to bring up the three regiments from Buffalo to his support. It may be remembered that the regular general showed himself, in a later month of the campaign, as incapable in the position of commander-in-chief as he now showed himself disloyal in the position of colleague. He never stirred to help the effort on his right.

Van Rensselaer had fixed upon the heights above the Canadian village of Queenstown, seven miles from the northern end of the river, as his objective. Landing below them, he intended to seize a position on their crest, and then fortify himself in an entrenched camp, to which he would draw over Smyth and his other reserves. As he had more than 3,500 of his own brigade present, while Brock's 2,000 men were necessarily strung out along a front of thirty-six miles, and could not be concentrated till the second day, there was a reasonable probability of success. The opposition to him must be trifling at the first, and he ought to be well established in a central position, breaking the Canadian line of defence in two, before he could be attacked by any serious force. But Van Rensselaer had failed to reckon on the splendid energy of Brock and his men, and on the want of organization and coherence in his own command,

of which three-fourths were raw and undisciplined militiamen.

On the night of October 12th–13th, Van Rensselaer threw his advanced guard across the rapid river, just above Queenstown, at a point where the passage was completely commanded by a six-gun battery on his own side. Some of his boats were carried too far down stream, but ten, bearing some 225 men, mostly of the 13th United States regulars, struck the bank at the appointed spot, put their men ashore, and returned for a second load. The passage had not escaped the notice of the British piquets along the bank, and before dawn opposition was beginning. At Queenstown there lay the two flank companies of the 49th Regiment, and two more of the York Militia. By four o'clock in the morning a small "containing force" of some ninety men, half regulars, half militia, was skirmishing with the landing party, which had established itself close to the bank, to wait for reinforcements. Riders had been sent up and down stream to warn Brock at Fort George, and the detachments at Brown's Point, Chippewa, and the distant Fort Erie, that the invasion had come at last. Meanwhile the American boats were beginning to ply to and fro, only slightly incommoded by two one-gun batteries on the Canadian shore, of which one was soon silenced by the six guns opposite, and the other was too far from the passage-point to be effective.

When the second party of Americans came ashore, they drove in the British skirmishing line, though not before Colonel Solomon van Rensselaer (cousin of the general), three other officers, and many men had fallen. But a check was given to their advance when the rest of the garrison of Queenstown came up. Though still only 250 strong, against about 500, the 49th and York Militia companies fought strongly, and wasted for their adversaries the time which was so all-important for the mustering of the defenders.

About seven o'clock Brock himself came upon the scene absolutely alone: he had outridden his solitary aide-de-

camp, and took up his post on the edge of Queenstown Heights, overlooking the scene of the skirmish. Below him he could see the slow advance of the Americans in the flat by the river, the boats crossing and recrossing behind them, and the camp at Lewiston slowly disgorging its battalions into the river craft. His whole confidence lay in the hope that his reinforcements from Fort George and Chippewa—four companies of the 41st, two of militia, and some 200 Indians—would be up in time to stop the attack before it had been reinforced to an overwhelming strength. Therefore it was necessary for the troops already on the ground to hold out with all desperation. Brock's first order was for the last unengaged units—the light company of the 49th and Chisholm's company of the York Militia—to charge in hard. But presently he saw that he was outflanked: by an unobserved fishermen's track along the steep slope of the heights, a party of the 13th United States regulars, on the extreme American left, was working itself up to the crest.

The General was standing by the one-gun battery on the edge of the heights, whose garrison of twelve men was now his sole reserve. When the musket-balls began to fall around him, he was forced to retire, and with a rush some 150 Americans reached the crest, seized the battery, and took up a position about it. It was absolutely necessary to keep them back, and Brock called up from the skirmish below the nearest men that could be caught, some ninety regulars and militia mixed, and advanced to recover the point of vantage. The skirmish grew hot: the British and Canadians charged, were repelled, and charged again. At this moment it was reported to Brock that his first reinforcement had come up—two weak companies, ninety men, of the York Militia from Brown's Point. He was turning to shout to the messenger, "Push on the York Volunteers", when he was struck by a ball in the right breast, which passed completely through his body. He rolled off his horse, had just breath enough left to bid the officer nearest him to keep his fall concealed, and was dead within the

minute. His corpse was carried down hill to Queenstown and hidden under a pile of blankets, in obedience to his orders.

The charge which Brock was heading was continued, under the leadership of his Canadian aide-de-camp John Macdonell. It drove the Americans out of the battery, and to the very edge of the precipitous slope behind it. But the striking force was too small: Macdonell fell, and with him nearly all the other officers of the companies engaged. The enemy was being continually reinforced up the steep path behind, and the odds were too great. The attack failed, and the survivors withdrew far back on to the plateau, where they were joined by the remnants of the detachment that had been fighting below. Not more than 200 unwounded men were left. The reinforcements from Fort George and Chippewa were not yet arrived. It looked as if the Americans had won the heights and established themselves on the point of vantage at which they had aimed.

But Brock's glorious fight had not failed in its object. The enemy was exhausted: the regular regiment which formed the kernel of his army had done most of the fighting, and was now a spent force. The reinforcements were crossing the river with an incredible slowness, due to want of order and discipline. Only 1,300 men had been passed up to noon, out of 3,500 who had to cross. The advanced division, reduced to some 600 or 800 men, had established itself, it is true, on the heights, but had neither begun to entrench nor to deploy, in order to drive back the small force still opposed to it. General van Rensselaer, who had crossed late, after surveying the position, grew anxious about his reinforcements. The boats, he says in his dispatch, were plying very slowly, the troops embarking with inexplicable tardiness. He recrossed the river, to hurry matters up in the camp at Lewiston.

In his absence the crisis suddenly came: at last Brigadier Sheaffe had arrived from Fort George with four companies of the 41st and 200 Indian warriors. From the other flank at Chippewa about 100 more regulars had come up. The

whole met the wrecks of the containing force near the village of St. David's, below the northern brow of Queenstown Heights. They mustered only 800 in all, including the Indians; but the sole chance lay in striking before the whole American army was over the water. Brock's intentions were known, and his spirit still dominated in the strife, though his body lay hidden obscurely two miles away. Sheaffe, though he had many defects, was a good fighter: an old "United Empire Loyalist", who had served King George from the days of Bunker's Hill: he saw the chance of avenging many an ancient grudge on the old enemy. He deployed his little force, advanced obliquely up the heights at a great distance from the enemy's front, and sent out his Indians to work through some wooded ground on the left against the American flank, while he himself, the regulars on the right, the militia on the left, advanced in one two-deep line against their front.

The attack was completely successful: the Americans were tired out by the earlier fighting, and disheartened by the non-arrival of their reinforcements. Many of the militia, it is said, were skulking at the foot of the slope or on the river bank, instead of holding their place on the heights. One push sent the whole line flying: reeling back from the battery which they held, the whole were brought up by the precipice at their back. A few scrambled away by the path, but the majority threw down their arms. Pressing on, as best they could, in such rugged ground, Sheaffe's men took more prisoners in the flat below, and saw the boats shove off to the opposite shore with a flying remnant of their adversaries.

And so, like Douglas at Otterbourne, "the dead man won the field". The part of the American army which had crossed the Niagara was practically annihilated—the dead are said to have been some 90 in all; the wounded 400: there were 79 officers and 852 men captured, including Brigadier-General Wadsworth and the artillery colonel Scott, who was afterwards to be the Commander-in-Chief of the American army in a later war. Four hundred and

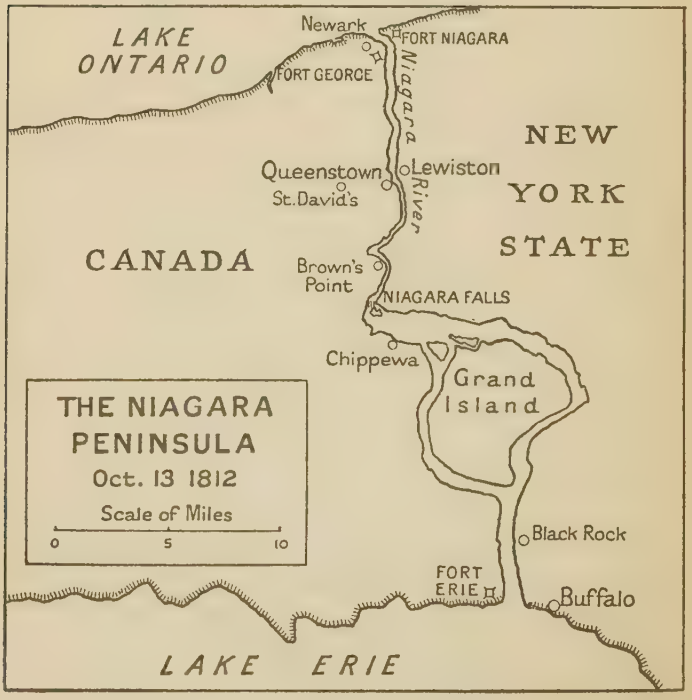
thirty-six of the prisoners belonged to the 13th United States Infantry, whose colours were captured, the rest to the militia. The British loss was 112 in all, of whom five-sixths came from the containing force that had fought so well in the morning.

General van Rensselaer, from the opposite bank, had the mortification of seeing his advanced-guard cut up, without being able to send help. His humiliating dispatch confesses that his rear would not follow when they saw the danger of his van. "The ardour of the unengaged troops", he writes, "had entirely subsided. I rode in all directions, urging the men by every consideration to pass the river, but in vain. Lieutenant-Colonel Bloom, who had been wounded in action and had returned, mounted his horse and rode through the camp, as did also Judge Peck, who happened to be there, exhorting the companies to proceed, but in vain. . . . One-third part of the idle men might have saved all!" It was fortunate for Canada and for Great Britain that the York and Lincoln Militia were as different in spirit from their opponents as was Brock from the incapable Van Rensselaer!

The Battle of Queenstown Heights brought the invasion danger to an end on the Niagara frontier for the rest of 1812, as the capture of Detroit had on the western frontier. Fighting was to recommence in the following spring, and to go through many vicissitudes. But there was never again the peril that Canada might be overwhelmed before she could be reinforced from Great Britain, which had been imminent all through the first autumn of the war. The tale of that struggle is not wholly a cheerful one to remember—English annalists do not linger over the names of the *Guerrière*, the *Java*, and the *Macedonian*: the Battle of New Orleans was an "untoward event" of the blackest. But that is no reason why the exploits of Isaac Brock, the saviour of Canada, should be forgotten.

The Provincial Legislature of the Upper Province reared a column as a memorial over his body and that of his faithful aide-de-camp Macdonell, on the spot where they

fell. Many years after it was shattered by an Irish-American named Lett, who had secretly introduced a quantity of gunpowder into the vault at its base. To wreck the grave of a hero seemed to him a neat and appropriate method of insulting the British Empire. The Canadians replaced the shattered monument by a much more stately structure, which dominates the whole surrounding country-side, and is one of the landmarks of the Niagara country. A proper centenary celebration was held around it on October 13, 1912. Great Britain placed a cenotaph in Brock's honour in the south transept of St. Paul's Cathedral, on which (in the classical style of the day) the general sinks down dying in the arms of a soldier of the 41st Regiment, while an Indian chief stands weeping at his feet.



XII

NAPOLEON AND HIS CAVALRY

IN dealing with such a vast subject as this, on which solid books of no mean size, like that of Colonel Picard, have been written, I feel that it is very hard to avoid a slip into one of two opposite dangers. If one keeps to general outlines and obvious comment, one risks the charge of being dull and having nothing new to say. If one attempts to go into illustrative detail, and to touch on controversies, there is considerable chance that one may become unintelligible, from citing too many obscure facts. It may be a case of the wood that was invisible because there were so many trees. This second peril is the worse one; it is better to be obvious than to be obscure. There is much profit, after all, in endeavouring to formulate general conclusions.

I shall simply, therefore, deal with Napoleon's cavalry, its numbers and organization, and then endeavour to explain his habitual methods of dealing with it. Examples of the actual management of regiments and brigades belong to the study of tactics. They may be followed by those who are anxious to work out details in the colossal works which the French War Office compiled in the first decade of the XXth century, such as the five volumes of Colin's *Campaign of Austerlitz* or the four volumes of Saski's *Campaign of 1809*, or Balagny's *Napoléon en Espagne*. Here there is detail and original documents sufficient to satisfy the most earnest and omnivorous inquirer.

The mounted troops which Napoleon, when he had carried out his *coup d'état* of Brumaire and made himself First Consul, took over from the Directory consisted of

84 regiments, 25 of heavy cavalry (of which only one was furnished with the cuirass), 25 regiments of chasseurs, 10 of hussars, 20 of dragoons. The heavy cavalry were three-squadron regiments theoretically composed of 531 men; the rest four-squadron regiments with a nominal effective of 942. In actual practice it was seldom found that a heavy regiment had more than 350–400 men in line, or a light cavalry regiment over 600. Napoleon had, of course, no time to reorganize the mounted arm before the campaigns of Marenzo and Hohenlinden. But in the long Continental peace which followed the treaty of Lunéville in 1801, and which did not end till the war with Austria and Russia in 1805, the Austerlitz campaign, he had ample time to make all the changes that he pleased. There was nothing to hinder him in the fact that during the greater part of the period 1801–5 he was engaged in a maritime war with England. His land forces were not concerned in it, except the army of Egypt, which was captured wholesale in 1801 by Abercromby's expedition.

In Bonaparte's reorganization of 1802 we note three main points. The first was that he much diminished the number of heavy cavalry regiments, but made those which remained much heavier. We are told that when he took over charge of the army the twenty-five heavy cavalry regiments differed in little but name from the dragoons—the men on an average were no bigger, the horses no taller or stronger; the only practical difference was that they wore blue instead of green uniforms, and carried two pistols, instead of the carbine, furnished with a short bayonet, which marked the dragoon. Both differed from light cavalry in using the straight thrusting sword, and not the curved sabre which belonged to hussars and *chasseurs à cheval*.

Bonaparte cut down the number of heavy cavalry regiments from 25 to 14 before 1802 was over, but made the surviving corps much heavier. They were furnished with the cuirass—in all twelve of cuirassiers and two of carabineers. The old heavy cavalry regiments Nos. 12 to 18 were turned into dragoon regiments; those numbered from

19 to 25 were drafted into the new cuirassier and carabineer regiments, except men who were notably short and weak, and unfit to wear the cuirass. So with the horses—all the strong and tall mounts of the twenty-five old regiments did not suffice to do more than fill up the ranks of the fourteen new ones. The cuirassiers, then, a creation of 1802, may be considered to be Bonaparte's special contribution to the French cavalry arm, as a result of his observations during his earlier campaigns of 1795–1800. They were very heavy cavalry indeed, wearing both breast-plate and back-plate, and not merely a front protection like some of the heavy cavalry of the old French monarchy, or the Austrian cuirassiers with whom they were so frequently to be matched. Their headgear was also new—the steel helmet, with peak in form of a vizor and long horsehair plume, superseding the broad cocked hat which the old French heavy cavalry wore.

The very limited number of cuirassier regiments were all through their existence told off by Napoleon purely for battle service, and almost invariably were used as a cavalry reserve, destined to strike heavy blows in the last stages of a general action. They were never dispersed as divisional cavalry, or army corps cavalry, but down to 1812 were kept united in brigades or divisions entirely composed of themselves. In 1812 Napoleon tried the experiment of attaching one regiment of lancers, a new arm only just created, to each cuirassier brigade, with the direction that the lancer regiment was to do all the light service, to furnish all patrols and vedettes, escorts, etc., so that the cuirassier regiments might always be intact and complete, and might be in full strength for battle whenever wanted. The experiment was not repeated either for the army of 1813 or for that which marched to ruin at Waterloo. In each of these the cuirassier regiments were massed in perfectly homogeneous brigades and divisions.

Though in the course of the twelve years of empire which were before him in 1802 Napoleon added many new regiments to his cavalry, only two of them were fresh

cuirassier units. Of the 13th and 14th regiments of that arm, the 14th was taken over from the Dutch army when Holland was annexed in 1810; the other was constituted in the previous year from a number of cuirassier drafts who had been acting together in Spain as a provisional regiment. Having done very good service they were, as a token of honour and reward, constituted into a permanent unit with the number 13. The reason for keeping down the total number of cuirassier regiments was mainly expense—the large and strong horses required to carry big men in very heavy equipment were both dear and hard to procure; in France, Normandy was the only district which bred them, and the majority of the mounts had to be procured in Germany. In 1805 the best of the captured horses of Mack's army, when it surrendered at Ulm, and in 1806 the horses of all the Prussian heavy cavalry which was captured after Jena, were handed over to the cuirassiers of the victorious French army. But such chances of procuring remounts for nothing and in great quantities did not recur. We often get the note that bad weather and winter campaigning were especially fatal to the mounts of this ponderous reserve cavalry, when those of the hussars and chasseurs suffered comparatively little.

With the fourteen cuirassier regiments ranked the two other heavy regiments which Napoleon maintained—the 1st and 2nd of Carabineers; they were originally a sort of horse-grenadiers, wearing bearskins, and without body armour, and carried (as their name shows) the carbine instead of the pair of pistols allotted to the cuirassiers. But after Wagram, in 1809, Napoleon directed that these two regiments should be furnished with back- and breast-plates, so that for all intents and purposes they became cuirassiers. They were always kept among the reserve cavalry, and the two regiments were brigaded together all through the years of their existence.

In sharp contrast to the moderate number of sixteen heavy cavalry regiments in all which Napoleon possessed was the great number of regiments of dragoons and of

definitely light cavalry—chasseurs and hussars. In 1802, counting the six old heavy cavalry regiments which were renumbered as dragoons—there were 30 regiments of them—Napoleon had taken over 20 only from the Republican government in 1800. Of chasseurs he started with 25 regiments, but gradually raised the number to 31. Of hussars the old ten regiments were finally increased to 14. Lastly, the Emperor, far on toward the end of his career, created a class of cavalry hitherto unknown in the French national army, by establishing 9 regiments of lancers. In 1813, when the number of cavalry units was at its highest in Napoleon's army, there were but 16 heavy regiments to 76 of medium and light horse.

The distinction between the 30 dragoon regiments and the other 46 was that the former retained at first some traces of the original character for which that arm had been formed. So far back as the XVIIth century they were essentially horsemen who were furnished with a musket (though a short one), and who were trained to fight on foot as well as on horseback. When dragoons first came into existence about the time of the Thirty Years War, they had been something of the kind of mounted infantry. That is to say, they were men with fire-arms who had been provided with horses in order that they might move rapidly, not light cavalry furnished with a musket for skirmishing purposes. Originally they had not been taught cavalry drill, and their horses were mere cobs—in Cromwell's army, for example, there was a standing order that the maximum price to be paid for a dragoon horse was to be only from half to two-thirds of that allowed for the purchase of a horse for a regular cavalry regiment. Though provided with the sword, they had been taught to look on their musket as their main weapon, and when bayonets were invented in the end of the XVIIth century they had been duly furnished with them.

All through the XVIIIth century, however, the dragoons in every army in Europe, not in the French army only,

were tending to become more and more cavalry, and less and less mere mounted infantry. This seems everywhere, in England no less than in France, to have come from no fixed policy of the military authorities, but rather from the misplaced energy of colonels who, wanting to assimilate their regiments to cavalry, improved the quality of the horses, exercised their corps more and more in the elaborate mounted drill of that period, and taught them to charge in line with the sword, instead of relying on dismounted service with the musket as their proper mode of action. By the time of Frederick the Great the dragoons, alike in the Prussian, the French, and the English armies, had become merely a sort of cavalry which carried muskets or carbines, and were brigaded with, and numbered in sequence with, other cavalry of the line. They were no longer a separate arm, as they had been in 1650 or 1680. They only differed from other horse in that they were, because of their more effective fire-arms, expected to take charge of the skirmishing line in the commencement of cavalry actions, and were still considered to be the proper troops to send forward to seize posts and defiles when infantry could not get up in time. They were ear-marked for dismounted work when cavalry was sent out unaccompanied by the other arms on exploration raids and reconnaissances. But their uniforms had been changed and assimilated to that of cavalry in a way that made the service on foot very inconvenient. The French dragoons, when Napoleon took them over, were wearing tall brass-crested helmets and long boots to the knee, an equipment which made dismounted skirmishing work particularly difficult and uncomfortable. To scramble through hedges and ditches in tall boots and heavy brass helmets with crests and plumes was absurd.

Bonaparte seems in the beginning of his imperial rule to have conceived the notion of going back to the old ideal that dragoons should be essentially mounted infantry, and not a sort of medium heavy cavalry equipped with a fire-arm that was inconveniently long for mounted service. In 1801–2 we find that he issued special orders that the dragoons at

the great camps of Compiègne and Amiens were to be taught infantry drill, and especially the bayonet exercise, and what was more important, he made the experiment of substituting in many regiments gaiters suitable for easy movements on foot for the high and heavy boots reaching to the knee which were in use. It is said that he had been influenced in the direction of creating mounted infantry by the good service which he had seen performed in Egypt by the camel corps which he had organized there, a body which moved rapidly, but, of course, could not charge, and always dismounted to fight on foot. In 1803, when the main body of the French army was camped along the shores of the Channel for the projected invasion of England, Bonaparte brought almost the whole of his dragoons to the coast without horses. There were to be some twenty regiments of them embarked, with their saddles alone; the transport of horses in the small flat-bottomed boats which formed his Boulogne flotilla being only possible on a very small scale. These dragoons, after the landing in Sussex or Kent, were to be furnished with horses seized in the countryside—perfectly untrained of necessity. So that it was clearly Napoleon's intention to execute his invasion of England with little but mounted infantry to support the other arms. Till the horses should be collected, the dragoon regiments were to march on foot as battalions of infantry. If the invasion had ever taken place, it is curious to speculate on what might have happened. The strength of a French army at this time depended very much on its excellent cavalry with its great power of manœuvring. Bonaparte was prepared to forgo this advantage, and would have had little to oppose to the very considerable force of English cavalry then concentrated along the south coast. Moreover, he would have been disappointed in the idea that he could rapidly mount his dragoons on requisitioned horses, as the English Government had made elaborate preparations for the transport into the interior of all horses of all descriptions—draught as well as riding—at the first news of a landing. Practically the French would have

had to operate with a force composed of infantry and artillery alone.

When the Emperor's plan for obtaining command of the English Channel and throwing his army ashore in Sussex had failed, owing to the vigilance of Nelson and (we must add) of Lord Barham, the head of the Admiralty, Napoleon found himself almost immediately engaged in the Austro-Russian War of 1805. It is interesting to find that he marched straight off from the Channel to the Danube one division of no less than 5,000 dismounted dragoons, who had been prepared to act as mounted infantry for the invasion of England, and had no horses ready. Eight regiments, the division of Baraguay d'Hilliers, marched all the way on foot from Boulogne to Ulm in their gaiters, with the short musket and bayonet on their shoulders. It was a disaster to this force which seems to have turned the Emperor away from his well-developed plan for making his dragoons into mounted infantry. Baraguay d'Hilliers's division was acting as the baggage guard of one of the main columns, which was performing the circular sweep round Ulm that shut in General Mack, and forced him to surrender with all his army. It was marching behind Dupont's division with its convoy, and the grand park of artillery. The one large Austrian detachment which escaped from Ulm, that commanded by the Archduke Ferdinand, a force largely composed of cavalry, happed at Albeck upon the column formed by Dupont and the dismounted dragoons. After getting past the flank of Dupont with much trouble, a great part of the Archduke's horse fell upon the convoy and park, with the dismounted dragoons escorting them. In the combat which followed the Archduke's cavalry pushed back the dragoons and captured much of the great train which eight regiments of them were escorting. The explanation given by French authorities is that the dragoons, while ceasing to be cavalry, had become only mediocre infantry, manœuvred badly, failed to form square promptly, and were easily thrust away from the important convoy which they were guarding. Though hotly pursued on the following

days by Murat, the cavalry of this Austrian column got away, towards Bohemia, though the infantry were taken. It was the only section of Mack's army which escaped capture. Napoleon ordered a court of inquiry, not a court martial, to sit on Baraguay d'Hilliers, and seems to have been convinced by its report that the division of dismounted dragoons had failed to put up a good fight, because its training had halted half-way between that of cavalry and infantry, and had not fitted it for a stand-up fight on infantry tactics. The deduction which he seems to have drawn from the affair of Albeck was that it was no use to treat the dragoons as infantry, and that he must resign himself to falling back on the tendency that had been operating for the last hundred years. He must recognize that they had merely become cavalry, and employ them as such in the main; though, as they were armed with the short musket, they might be used for skirmishing, the seizing of advanced positions and the defence of villages in preference to other cavalry. All the dismounted squadrons were furnished with horses ere long, from those captured from the Austrian cavalry which had surrendered.

In the Prussian campaign of 1806, which followed so closely on the Austrian War of 1805, we find all the dragoons mounted on regularly trained cavalry horses, save four battalions formed of squadrons not yet mounted, which followed in the rear of the army, and were ere long provided with horses from the spoils of the Prussians captured at Jena or in the retreat from that field. It is perhaps what might have been expected after Bonaparte's late experiment: but the next note that we find upon the dragoons is that they are accused of having been so much impregnated with infantry notions, that they could not always act satisfactorily as cavalry. Though they did some very distinguished service both in the Jena fighting and in the pursuit of Hohenlohe's army which followed, we have a strong protest against their inefficiency in the February which followed, from General Milhaud, who commanded a six-regiment division of dragoons in the

Eylau campaign. The occasion was the combat of Burkersdorf on February 14, 1807: Milhaud and his division had been executing a reconnaissance in force towards Friedland, and were retiring, followed by an enemy of very inferior strength. He was falling back in echelon of brigades at his leisure, keeping off with ease a small observing force of Cossacks, when he was suddenly attacked in flank by a single regiment of Russian hussars, which emerged unexpectedly from a village and rode in upon him. Milhaud gave orders for the nearest brigade to form front to flank, but it failed to do so in time to meet the Russian onset, and was charged and broken long before it was ready. Thereupon the other two brigades, still in process of formation and clubbed by unsteady manœuvring, rode off the field before they had been attacked at all. They then started galloping, and could not be rallied till they had gone three miles to the rear. Milhaud wrote in fury to Murat that evening that he had tried not to survive such a disgraceful rout of his division, by riding straight at the front of the enemy, with only four men behind him, but by some miracle had been neither killed nor taken. He then asked to be relieved of his command "je ne veux pas commander de pareilles troupes"—they could not be trusted to make a simple change of formation in a hurry, and had gone off the field in disorder when they found themselves caught in a disadvantageous position even by a very inferior number. The explanation given was that many of the men had actually been trained only to infantry drill, and had only received horses after reaching the front in Poland. They got flurried, and fell into hopeless disorder, when suddenly attacked in flank, because of their consciousness that they were not capable of executing any movement in haste. The last campaign had proved the danger of a half-cavalry training to troops acting as infantry—this one proved the danger of a half-infantry training to troops acting as cavalry.

Speaking generally, it may be said that after 1807 Napoleon gave up entirely any notion of using dragoons

as mounted infantry—for the future they may be considered in his army as merely one of the five sorts of cavalry. They even ceased to be distinguished from the others by their having a musket, for in 1811 the Emperor ordered the cuirassiers to be furnished with a carbine or "musketoon", and the chasseurs had already been provided with it. Of all the French cavalry in Napoleon's last three years of reign, 1812–13–14, only the newly created lancers had not got it, and the Emperor had issued orders, just before the Russian War of 1812 broke out, that experiments should be made to see whether the carbine could not be carried along with the lance—though this combination was never actually made, the addition turning out to be too cumbersome.

In the later part of the Napoleonic regime, therefore, from 1807 onward, the mounted infantry idea may be considered to have disappeared. It may be noted that by far the larger part of the 30 dragoon regiments, 24 out of 30, were transferred to Spain after 1808. Napoleon never sent his cuirassier brigades to the Peninsular War, mainly, as it seems, because he wished to keep them massed in central Europe, even in time of peace, in order to have them ready to oppose to the heavy cavalry of Austria and Russia. In Spain there was practically nothing but light cavalry among the allied armies—the two or three English heavy regiments which were there in 1808–10 were hardly worth noticing. It was not till 1812 that Wellington had as many as six regiments which were not light cavalry. But partly also it would seem that the cuirassiers and carabineers were kept out of the Spanish War, because the Emperor rightly thought that it would be difficult to keep their horses in good order in those arid regions, and impossible to replace them from local sources, since Spain breeds no mounts suitable for such ponderous troops as his cuirassiers. In the countless narratives of engagements between the French and British cavalry which I have had to go through, I have never found that the numerous French dragoon regiments showed any

marked tendency to act as mounted infantry—they worked like any other cavalry except that occasionally we hear of their throwing dismounted skirmishers into villages or passes, as at Calcalbellos and Usagre, but not on any large scale nor particularly effectively. Indeed, the heavy brass helmet and the tall boots made them unsuitable for long and continuous fighting on foot, as I have already had occasion to observe. The Peninsular War practically absorbed all Napoleon's dragoon-force: only 6 of the 30 regiments were available for the Wagram campaign of 1809 or the Russian campaign of 1812; only 4 regiments went to Russia. After the Moscow disaster the Emperor began to withdraw his dragoons by successive brigades from Spain, and they were all that he had of good veteran cavalry in his Leipzig campaign, and in the defence of France in 1814. During those two campaigns he used them as his real heavy cavalry, having lost his 14 cuirassier regiments in the snows of Russia, and never having been able to replace them. For the so-called cuirassier regiments of 1813 were mostly weak units, hastily organized on the depots of the old regiments with recruits, and horses of all sorts and sizes obtained by requisition. They never had the weight or ascendancy in battle that had belonged to the old corps that had perished in the Moscow retreat. If any one wants to realize what one of the reorganized cuirassier regiments was like at the opening of the campaign of 1813, he may find a humorous account of the mishaps of the colonel sent to organize one of these assemblies of raw men and horses in the memoirs of that officer, De Gonneville—a very readable work. The first time that the commanding officer got the whole regiment out for drill, and gave the order to draw swords, many scores of horses bolted: one whole squadron was carried away in a stampede for a mile, there was a general breaking of lines and a jam. Over two hundred men got dismounted, and it was two hours before the whole corps could be collected again in line. When reading the narrative, and realizing that only a few weeks later this sort of cavalry

was taken on to the battle-field, one realizes why Napoleon's mounted arm in 1813 failed him, except for the veteran dragoon regiments withdrawn by degrees from Spain, and set to leaven too large a lump of raw and incapable conscript cavalry.

To pass on from the dragoons to the light cavalry, there was no essential difference save in the way of costume between the chasseurs and the hussars, so far as their drill or their tactical employment went. The latter category of cavalry had possessed a certain individuality in the old army of the French monarchy, before the Revolution began, all the hussar regiments having been originally foreign troops. As every one knows, the hussar equipment was originally of Hungarian origin, though by the XVIIIth century the Prussian and other German governments raised hussar regiments, who were at first intended to be the lightest of light cavalry, and were to find their proper sphere in raids and reconnaissances rather than in pitched battles. Copying Frederick the Great, whose hussars had taught them, in the Seven Years War, many lessons of mobility and enterprise, the ministers of Louis XV thought that they must raise light cavalry of this type, over and above their own existing *chevaux légers*. They were originally all foreigners, in some small degree Hungarians borrowed from the Austrian ally, but mainly miscellaneous Germans, who had served in other armies before joining the French. But by 1789 there was a certain proportion of Frenchmen mixed among them, but in a small minority. Altogether there were only six regiments of them. The foreign recruiting mainly ceased when the great war of 1792 broke out, though the German character of the hussar regiments was partly kept up by allowing them to enlist foreign adventurers, and partly by encouraging their recruiting in the German-speaking Alsace. But by Napoleon's accession to power in 1800 the hussars were practically national troops, and no longer essentially the foreign mercenaries that they had once been. In the general reorganization of the French cavalry that followed the Peace of Lunéville,

Napoleon kept or created 10 regiments of them, as against 26 of the other category of light cavalry, the *chasseurs à cheval*, so that the hussars were in a small minority. The number of their regiments afterwards rose to 13, mainly from the taking into the French army of already existing foreign hussar regiments, when Holland and part of Westphalia were annexed to the French Empire in 1810 and 1811. By the time that the hussars rose to 13 regiments the chasseurs had been raised to 31, so that the former always remained in their proportional strength of less than one-half of the chasseurs.

There was no essential difference between them so far as employment went, only the hussars retained the original Hungarian dress, with high cap with aigrette, and furred pelisse, while the chasseurs had the tall plumed felt shako, and green, close-fitting single-breasted coat, crossed with much braiding, and long pantaloons. Both carried a very broad and much curved sabre. These two classes of light cavalry were brigaded indifferently with each other; there was never any attempt to make separate hussar brigades and chasseur brigades, as was always done with the cuirassiers and dragoons. I cannot find that there was any choice between the two sorts of regiment when detachments for exploration, raiding work, or rapid pursuits were made. They worked together indifferently.

The bulk of the hussar and chasseur regiments in one of Napoleon's armies were utilized to furnish the army corps cavalry. Each corps had two or three, occasionally four, of them attached to it. When they were less than four, the corps cavalry were generally called a brigade; when more, a division. An army of eight corps, therefore, would absorb some twenty or twenty-five of the light cavalry regiments for its corps-cavalry. The remainder were formed into three or four brigades attached to the so-called reserve cavalry, of which the nucleus was always formed by the sixteen cuirassier and carabineer regiments, and to which the larger part of the dragoons were also added. For dragoon regiments were seldom used as corps

cavalry, being nearly always placed in the reserve. When this central cavalry reserve was divided into sections, called originally divisions but in 1812 and 1813 "corps" of cavalry, the usual system was to attach about an equal number of light and heavy brigades to each unit. In all cases the chasseurs and hussar brigades were supposed to take up the advanced-guard work and reconnaissance duty for the whole corps, while the cuirassier regiments were held back for the engagements on a large scale and pitched battles.

It remains to speak of one more class of cavalry which was introduced into the imperial army so late as June 18, 1811, the lancers, or *chevaux légers lanciers*, as they were technically called. Down to this date the only regular regiment armed with the lance in the French army was that Polish regiment, the "Lancers of the Vistula", which is too well remembered by English students of military history for the havoc that it made on Colborne's brigade at Albuera. But Napoleon had also other Polish auxiliary regiments serving him, which did not belong to his own army but to the contingents supplied to him by the "Grand Duchy of Warsaw", as he styled that Polish state which he had created in 1807. There had been no lancers in the French hosts since the XVIth century, though the great Maurice de Saxe had vainly tried to get them introduced in the time of Louis XV. Indeed, the lance was nowhere used in Europe from 1600 down to the very end of the XVIIIth century save among the Poles. The few regiments of Uhlans (the word is Polish) which were to be found in the Austrian and Prussian armies about 1800 were all embodied from the Polish subjects of those powers. Napoleon's tardy recognition of the virtues of the lance in 1811 was entirely due to the good service which he had seen his Polish auxiliaries do with it, especially at Wagram. He formed nine regiments of lancers of the line, by transforming old existing corps into lance-regiments, telling off six regiments of French dragoons, one of chasseurs, and the old "Lancers of the Vistula" to form the new

category of troops. The dragoon regiments at first preserved their old uniform, the brass helmet and high boots, but later all the nine regiments armed with the lance adopted the Polish style of dress, with the square-topped lancer cap, the tight tunic, and long breeches reaching to the ankle with short boots.

The particular profit which the Emperor hoped to get from the introduction of this new sort of cavalry into the service seems to have been, to a certain extent, that which was foreseen in the early XXth century from the giving of the lance to at least the first rank in cavalry of all sorts all over Europe. I mean the advantage of increased effectiveness of shock in combats between cavalry and cavalry acting in mass, when one side opposes the longer weapon to an enemy not provided with it. But there was another reason which acted in 1811, though it is of little importance now—the superiority of the lance over the sabre in attacking infantry in square, who have exhausted their fire, and are relying on the bayonet alone for keeping off advancing cavalry. For the length of the lance being greater than that of the musket and bayonet, it was possible to use it effectively against men standing in square, when the sabre could not reach them. Not only did raw or shaken infantry often waste the whole of their fire simultaneously against charging cavalry, so that when the volleys of all the ranks had been delivered the survivors of the charge found no rear rank of men loaded ready for them, but another consideration had to be remembered. With the musket of those days, heavy rain damped the powder and clogged the pan, so that occasions were known where not one piece out of four went off, when the command to fire was given. In such a case the square had to rely on its bayonets alone for keeping away the cavalry, which came up against it almost intact. There are several cases quoted in the history of Napoleon's later wars where lancers, in wet weather, broke infantry which had successfully driven off cavalry armed with the sabre alone. One was on the second day of the Battle

of Dresden, August 27, 1813, when Murat's cavalry reserve was attacking in drenching rain the squares formed by Lichtenstein's Austrian infantry division. These squares, though hardly able to defend themselves at all by fire, kept off by their solidity several charges of Bourdesoulte's cuirassiers, till General Latour Maubourg bethought him of the device of placing the fifty lancers who formed his escort, the only troops of that arm on the spot, in front of the first squadron of a cuirassier regiment which was repeating its charges. Marmont tells us that the idea was at once successful, that the lancers made a breach in the square which had hitherto proved inaccessible, and so the Austrian front was decisively broken, with disastrous results. Wherefore, he adds, the notion that Napoleon had in 1812 of attaching a lancer regiment to each heavy cavalry brigade was a good one, and it was a misfortune that the arrangement was not repeated in 1813. An almost precisely similar incident is related by Marbot in his account of the Battle of the Katzbach, which was also fought in very heavy rain. He writes that his own regiment, the 23rd Chasseurs, was utterly unable to break the square of a Prussian battalion, though it could not fire a single shot at him. His men fenced for several minutes sabre against bayonet, with no satisfactory result. But the 6th Lancers being ordered up against the same square, crushed in the front of the Prussians at the first charge because of the advantage of their longer weapon.

It must not, of course, be forgotten that another advantage of the lance was that it was far more effective in pursuit than the sabre, and that it could reach men who had thrown themselves down flat, and who in that position could not be reached with the shorter weapon. This last advantage was noted in the Zulu and Sudanese wars and other modern English campaigns.

On the other hand, when cavalry had got wedged in a mêlée, after a charge where neither side would give way, there is evidence from the Napoleonic wars that the lancer was gravely incommoded by the length of his

weapon when engaged with the hussar or dragoon. I have two notes on this from English sources, one with regard to the combat of Carpio, September 27, 1811, when the 16th Light Dragoons were engaged with the lancers of Berg. An officer of the former regiment writes that he had never before seen lancers: "They looked well, and were formidable till they were broken and closed with by our men, and then the lances proved an encumbrance: they caught in the appointments of other men and actually pulled them off their horses". The other note is as regards the combat of Genappe on the day before Waterloo, when it is noted that Subervie's lancers, as long as their line was unbroken, were most formidable and beat off our 7th Hussars, but when once they were involved in a hand-to-hand mêlée with the Life Guards, whose impact had burst through their first line, they were by no means to be feared, and were mastered in close combat with some ease, and driven back by inferior numbers. They had no room, it may be remarked, because the fight took place in a street, the entry into the village of Genappe, where both parties were jammed in the narrow space between the two rows of houses. Marbot's account of Polotzk bears this out.

So much for the character and composition of Napoleon's cavalry. It remains to be explained how he used it. Roughly speaking, we may divide this question into two sections—his employment of cavalry in battle, and his employment of it in the operations which preceded and followed the decisive general action, which was usually the climax of one of his campaigns. The latter section is quite as important as the former, for there were certain of the Emperor's campaigns in which the strategical advance and the pursuit were the decisive parts of the operations—as, for example, the Ulm campaign of 1805 and the Jena campaign of 1806. In each of these it was not the fighting itself so much as the use which was made of it after the initial success had been won, that was the

decisive thing. In each of these campaigns the victory was not by itself conclusive, but the cavalry pursuit which followed made it so, and ended in the annihilation of two armies of which great part had in each case quitted the actual battle-field in decent order, and might have got off and continued the war, if the pursuit had been conducted by a less energetic enemy than the Emperor.

To proceed, then, with the question of Napoleon's general employment of his cavalry in campaign.

We may notice first that he did not use it on a large scale for raids, or long movements at a great distance from his main body. The mass of his cavalry, including always the whole of the cuirassier and carabineer regiments, and also the cavalry of the Guard, was always with the central striking force of the army, not with the other and secondary body with which the Emperor tried to turn the enemy and get across his line of communications and retreat. I need hardly repeat here what has been so often set forth in books on Napoleonic strategy, that the normal shape of a campaign was the attack on the enemy, not with the mere intention of beating but with that of annihilating his field army. The hostile main body, not any fortress or capital, was always the Emperor's objective. His aim was not the winning of battles or the occupation of territory, but the wiping out of the enemy's army. And this aim, as worked out in great detail by Colonel Camon and other writers, was normally achieved by the combination of an attack which occupied the attention of the enemy, and held him fixed to the ground in which he had been caught, with the flanking action of a great column which by a wide sweep struck at the enemy's line of retreat and cut him off from it. This was the general type of the operations which succeeded completely at Ulm, Jena and Marengo, which partially succeeded in the early part of the Austrian campaign of 1809, and which failed in the attempt to cut off the Russian army in the early part of 1812, and at Bautzen, and very notably in the pursuit of Sir John Moore in December 1808.

We might have expected that the outflanking force, the one which was destined to get across the enemy's line of retreat, and shut him in, would normally have been composed to a very great proportion of cavalry, whose rapidity of movement would have been specially valuable in such a case. But I cannot find that this was the usual disposition of the Emperor's forces. The column which did the intercepting work was normally composed of one or more army corps, with their corps-cavalry alone accompanying them, or at the most with a division or two of dragoons attached, while the great bulk, the so-called cavalry Reserve Corps, will be found with the frontal force, which was destined to attack and immobilize the enemy's main body while the turning movement was in course of development.

We need not go into the details of the early Italian campaigns, for Napoleon had little cavalry in those days, and Italy is a country peculiarly ill-adapted for large cavalry operations, the plain being cut up with hedges, vineyards and canals in a way which makes cross-country operations almost impossible, while fighting in the mountains, like that of Montenotte or Rivoli, was necessarily incompatible with the employment of cavalry on a large scale or with decisive effect. We only find tactical use of comparatively small bodies at Castiglione and Marengo.

But looking to the Ulm campaign, a most typical development of the Napoleonic strategy, we find that in the great turning movement which ended in the capture of Mack and the main body of the Austrians, the extreme flanking columns, those which had farthest to march and were to intercept the one route, that by Memmingen and the Tyrol, over which Mack had a reasonable chance of escape, were formed by the army corps of Soult and Davoust, without any great body of horse in support. The cavalry reserve under Murat was with the Emperor himself, employed in the operations immediately round Ulm. Mack, it may be remarked, did not as a matter of fact try this one safe bolt-hole, but ran into the midst

of Napoleon's own forces, and the extreme turning columns had little or nothing to do, Soult and Davoust being unmolested in their march to place themselves across the roads to the south of Ulm. The cavalry were most usefully employed, however, after the fighting round Ulm (combats of Elchingen, etc.) in pursuing the scattered fractions of Mack's army which tried to escape by the long and perilous route to the north-east. But no one could have foreseen that Mack, when warned too late and striving to escape, would endeavour to get off by the least eligible and most dangerous line of retreat, instead of by the best one, where Soult was marching to cut him off with no certain prospect of being able to do so.

Similarly in the Jena campaign of 1806 we find that in the original disposition of forces the extreme French right, the column which would naturally strike in between the Prussian army and Berlin, when Brunswick found out his desperate position and began his necessary retreat, consisted of the army corps of Ney and Soult. The great mass of cavalry was with Murat in the centre, covering the advance of the Emperor's own main body, not assisting the flank movement. In the end, when the Prussians tried to retreat north instead of east, the column which actually intercepted their main body and brought it to a stand by the hard-fought defensive battle at Auerstadt, was a single army corps, that of Davoust, with no horsemen with it save the three regiments of its own corps cavalry. Davoust narrowly failed to be beaten, precisely because he had hardly any horsemen at all to oppose to the 10,000 mounted men of Brunswick. Meanwhile Murat's cavalry was smashing up the smaller half of the Prussian army under the Emperor's own eye, in the battle of Jena, where Napoleon had such a superiority over the force opposed to him that victory was never for a moment doubtful. The French must have won, even if the greater part of Murat's squadrons had been elsewhere. But after the battle the Cavalry Reserve was most admirably employed in the pursuit of the broken Prussian army, which was

even more completely successful than the hunt after the escaping fractions of Mack's host in the preceding year.

Much the same division of the arms may be remarked in the two successive attempts which the Emperor made to outflank and cut off the Russian army during his advance on Moscow. In the first of these, the operations between Vilna and Vitepsk, the turning column was composed of the corps of Davoust. In the second, that between Vitepsk and Smolensk, it was that of Junot which formed the extreme flanking force, and was intended to cut off Bagration and Barclay from their line of retreat along the Moscow road. During both these marches the main cavalry force, more than 20,000 men under Murat, was battering away at the rearguard of the retreating Russian army, rather than endeavouring to get ahead of it and intercept its line of communications.

In the campaign which followed the Russian disaster, the Emperor was never again in the position to dispose of such vast bodies of cavalry as he had owned in 1805, 1807, 1809 or 1812, but we may nevertheless notice that even if his cavalry was rather inefficient, he still preferred to retain it with his main body rather than to use it for the great circular sweeps which were still his usual method of operations. In the crucial battle of the first campaign of 1813, that of Bautzen, where the failure to surround the inferior army of the allies was complete, the great turning column under Ney, which was to cut in upon the rear of the Russians and Prussians, was nearly 100,000 strong, three full army corps, but there were only 6,000 cavalry in all with it.

It is in consonance with this habitual dislike of Napoleon to use his cavalry for wide turning movements, that we find him never (it may practically be said) using it for long-distance raids—I mean incursions into the enemy's rear for the purpose of destroying roads or bridges, capturing magazines, or disorganizing the administration of the country-side. Such operations were not unknown to the earlier age—twice Frederick the Great had seen Berlin

captured in his rear by flying forces of Austrian and Russian light horse. And in 1813 similar tactics were tried on the largest scale against Napoleon himself, when (while the French army was still on the Oder) Tettenborn rode ahead with his cossacks and hussars, captured Hamburg and Lubeck and pushed into the middle of the electorate of Hanover, upsetting the French administration and raising the country-side in local insurrection. A similar cavalry incursion round Napoleon's rear, in the weeks before the Battle of Leipzig, had very appreciable results in distracting his reserves, and diminishing the extent of the country from which he could draw his supplies. The only instance of any importance in which we can speak of Napoleon's cavalry executing something like a raid was Lassalle's capture of Stettin in 1806. And this was not a deliberate independent enterprise ordered by the Emperor himself, but a case where a cavalry brigadier, taking part in a general pursuit of a routed army, diverged on his own responsibility to seize an important fortress and bridge, over which the retreating Prussians might probably attempt to pass, and succeeded in doing so owing to his own power of "bluffing" and the inconceivable stupidity and cowardice of the governor.

It seems that Napoleon did not choose to utilize his cavalry for raids, even when he had a large superiority in it, and preferred to use it as a battering force in battle, or as a screening force in front of his main columns of attack. Perhaps we may explain his attitude by remembering that his end was always to break up and annihilate the army opposed to him, and that subsidiary operations which might harass it, but would not necessarily lead to its being surrounded and annihilated, seemed to him comparatively useless. A cavalry raid may incommode, but does not necessarily lead to the destruction of the army whose rear has been molested. Exploits like Allenby's great circular sweep in Palestime in 1918 are rare in history.

The main duty of Napoleon's cavalry, then, was to

make its weight felt in battle, to urge pursuits to the extreme limit of possibility, and to screen the advance of the main columns, which it covered, on each road that they were using, at a moderate distance only to the front. On the comparatively rare occasions when he had been brought to a halt in the middle of a campaign by the exhaustion of his resources, or by a check received, the light cavalry brigades and dragoons of his central reserve would be disposed along the whole front of his line of cantonments, but the heavy brigades, the cuirassiers, carabineers and Guard cavalry, were drawn to the rear along with the infantry—the Emperor always intended them for battle-service only, and refused to wear them out by throwing them into the screen which performed outpost duty for the whole army. Such was the disposition of affairs during the long halt on the Prussian-Russian frontier which followed Eylau and preceded Friedland (March–May 1807), and in the check which ensued when in 1812 the Emperor had captured Moscow but found that the war was still to go on, and that he had exhausted his offensive power.

It remains only to speak of the Emperor's actual use of cavalry in the battle and the pursuit. Already, before he became the master of France, the old system of formal battles, in which each party disposed itself in parallel lines, with infantry in the centre and cavalry on the two wings, had ceased to be universal, though some of the famous engagements of Frederick the Great had still been fought upon that stereotyped plan. But in the first period of the War of the French Revolution the type of general actions had changed for a permanency. And instead of forming the symmetrical elbow-to-elbow lines of battle of the old style, French armies advanced to the attack in separate columns, which sought no alignment with each other, and each went for its objective in the way which its commander thought best. Indeed, the numbers engaged in these wars rendered the old system, by which an army advanced from a single road and deployed into action

in a single line, impossible. What an army of 25,000 men could do in the way of neat manœuvring could not be carried out by an army of 100,000 men or more, such as Napoleon often put into action. Hence the battle-lines were formed by bodies of troops coming to the front from several directions, at different hours, and in varying formations. There was no symmetry about it, and its order was constantly changing. For in a Napoleonic battle the fighting began, as a rule, long before many of the units had reached the ground. The cavalry had no longer its stereotyped place; it was no longer certain that the mass of it would be found on the two wings, with a solid reserve placed apart in the centre behind the infantry of the front line. Oddly enough, there was only one battle in Napoleon's whole career where the entire army was drawn out, as if for review, in a perfectly symmetrical array, and that was the least fortunate of all his actions—Waterloo. Critics have often speculated why he took such trouble, contrary to his wont, in the orderly deploying of the host that attacked Wellington, and some have supposed that he did so with the object of frightening his enemy into retreat by such a display of force, for he would have preferred to tackle Wellington in the running fight of pursuit, rather than to attack him deliberately in the excellent position which he had taken up.

Napoleon may (roughly) be said to have been an opportunist in his orders of battle, and to have taken the special needs of the particular action into account, without any stereotyped or favourite sort of formation. He placed his cavalry simply where he thought it would best serve his purpose. At Austerlitz the great mass of it was behind his left wing, massed under Murat. Putting aside the light cavalry attached to the separate army corps, all the mounted men save one division of dragoons, which supported the weak right wing of the army, and the Guard cavalry in reserve to the rear, were concentrated in this one quarter—not less than 96 squadrons, nearly 15,000 men, were thrown into the battle, ultimately, in this one

direction, smashing up the Russian right wing, while Soult and Bernadotte's infantry were piercing the centre. But concentration of this kind was by no means the Emperor's sole system. Not unfrequently he used cavalry drawn out in line to link the advance of infantry columns which would otherwise have been too far separated, and liable to be taken in flank by irruption of the enemy. At Essling and at Eylau his centre, during great part of the action, consisted of cavalry deployed in this fashion. At Ligny his whole right was composed of Grouchy's reserve cavalry, almost without any infantry support, who "contained" for the whole day one of the three army corps forming Blucher's host, without ever committing themselves to serious action. At Waterloo, on an entirely different system, the main mass of the cavalry was distributed equally in two bodies, behind the front line composed of the deployed infantry of Reille's and D'Erlon's corps. Only the corps cavalry of those two units was on the wings. Quite a different array to this was that of Wagram, where the main force of cavalry was about equally divided between the two wings, leaving little more than the Guard cavalry and one division of cuirassiers behind the centre—a disposition not unlike that of an old-fashioned battle *à la Frédéric*, which resulted in there being not enough cavalry in the centre to exploit the victory, when Macdonald's famous column finally won the battle, by breaking through the middle point of the Archduke Charles's long line. The only point in which Napoleon's battle arrays are all more or less similar is that he so arranged his cavalry that great masses of it could co-operate for those heavy attacks, far on in the day, which he specially practised. Even at Waterloo, where the cavalry was more equally distributed along the line than in any other of his actions, he did not employ it in a scattered fashion, but brought all the squadrons of his right centre (Milhaud) across the Brussels road westward, to employ it along with the cavalry of the left centre (Kellerman) in an attack on the single section of Wellington's line which he had

designed to pierce through, so that 12,000 sabres finally acted in a mass on one front of not much over three-quarters of a mile.

The typical employment of one of these great cavalry concentrations which the Emperor delighted to use was, as I have already said, for a thundering attack on a limited front some time after the battle had commenced, and the enemy's line was beginning to grow exhausted. A great battle began with what Colonel Camon in his elaborate study of Napoleon's methods calls the *combat d'usure*—attacks all along the line not pushed home but sufficiently vigorous to tie the enemy down to his ground, and cause his front line to lose its freshness. It was when he was growing somewhat battle-weary, and had begun to send his reserves into the fighting-line, that the blow would be delivered at the selected point, with a great mass of cavalry acting in conjunction with an infantry reserve—sometimes the Imperial Guard, sometimes (and more often) an army corps kept back for this special purpose. The Emperor's plan was to launch the cavalry reserve right into the middle of a fight in which the enemy was already engaged with troops of all arms, and had no time to reorganize his line for the special purpose of resisting a great attack by the mounted arm. Infantry already contending with French infantry, and not formed in square, lost in the smoke of a long morning's action, and unable to prepare themselves in time, were the game which he was always hoping to discover—and often did. The breach made in the hostile line by the unexpected irruption of a mass of cavalry, which turned right and left to sweep down the back of deployed lines of infantry, was the ideal that he aimed at. The thing that he least desired was to have to use up his all-important cavalry reserve too early in the day, against an enemy whose front was still intact, and who had leisure to prepare to receive the attack. That was the meaning of his angry comment on Ney's management of the great cavalry attack at Waterloo—"c'est trop tôt d'une heure"—the marshal had begun

to fall on the British centre before it had been seriously entamed, while it had ample leisure to form square. The cavalry should have been thrown in unexpectedly, in conjunction with an infantry assault all along the line. Ney would probably have replied that his master was to blame, —for already in the first episode of the fight allowing all his infantry save the Guard to be distracted to other points than that one in the centre where the crucial attack was to be made. He did, as a matter of fact, use up along with one of his cavalry attacks the sole infantry division that Napoleon had left him available—that of Bachelu. But this force was too small, and its appearance in the midst of the cavalry attacks had little or no effect. Thrice such a strength was required, and the Emperor had, in miscalculation, used up a far greater force (five divisions) than he had intended, in the preliminary attacks on Wellington's two flanks, where the final decisive thrust was not intended to be delivered.

The blow with the reserve cavalry which Napoleon habitually practised, therefore, was normally delivered late in the day, at the section of the hostile line where he intended to make his breach. That point might be broad or narrow; at Waterloo there is more than three-quarters of a mile between the Brussels road and the outermost enclosures of Hougoumont, the two limits of the cavalry attacks. The cavalry reserve was able to act on a long front of several brigades. On the other hand, there were cases where the Emperor spied a very narrow joint in the enemy's armour, and thrust with heavy forces at a front only a few hundred yards wide; such was the case at Ligny, where the two divisions of Milhaud's cuirassiers, which struck the decisive blow against the Prussian centre, had to act in a column of regiments, one behind the other, because of the limited space at their disposal. The same was the case with Montbrun's cuirassiers who stormed the great redoubt at Borodino, practically in column, swerving round its flank and entering it from the gorge. Of course, these cramped attacks were dreadfully costly from the

mass of men exposed to fire, and were far less likely to succeed than charges made with proper elbow-room, since the ground over which the rear squadrons had to charge was strewn with the wrecks of the regiments which had headed the column. Napoleon was quite aware of this, and in his general orders for his cavalry set forth the principle of attacks in successive lines, with a good space between the leading and the supporting brigades. But, as in all things, he held himself bound by no hard-and-fast rules. It did not matter how expensive a blow might be, if it pierced through the chosen point in the hostile line.

Occasionally we find great cavalry charges with the reserve made, not with the usual object of finishing the battle with the decisive blow, but for reasons of momentary necessity. The first clear case of this was the attack of the reserve cavalry at Eylau, which was made with the mere object of gaining necessary time. Napoleon's main stroke at the Russian centre, with Augereau's corps, had not only failed but had led to the almost complete extermination of that unfortunate unit, which had been, in a dense snowstorm, led against a great battery flanked by cavalry. So thoroughly was Augereau's corps broken, that the Emperor had no infantry centre left him for the moment, though his two wings were both gaining ground in a satisfactory way. He solved the problem of preventing the enemy from taking advantage of the break in his line by hurling the whole of his reserve cavalry at their centre—not so much with the hope of winning the battle by their charge, as with the intent of holding the enemy to his ground, till the French line was reorganized and Ney's corps had come up. The French cavalry, 10,000 strong, favoured by the same snowstorm which had been ruinous to Augereau, broke through both lines of the Russian centre, but could not hold its ground on the plateau which it had conquered, for want of infantry support. It had therefore in the end to recoil with heavy loss, but it had saved the day by holding the Russians fixed during the moment when they might have taken the offensive.

So much for the main outlines of Napoleon's use of cavalry; into tactics I cannot go, for two reasons—the one is that space fails: the subject is interminable. The second is that the Emperor did not trouble himself, as Frederick the Great had done, with the minutiæ of manœuvres. He handed over the masses of cavalry to his trusted lieutenants, and allowed them to use each the tactics that he chose. It was not, in his idea, the duty of the Commander-in-Chief to dictate the exact methods to be employed by the chief of the cavalry. His orders gave the object to be achieved, and the force to be employed. Murat or Kellerman or Milhaud or Latour-Maubourg or Grouchy settled for themselves how the means were to be brought to bear on the end. The Emperor was not himself a cavalry but an artillery officer, and he never undertook to settle more than the general outlines of one of his great attacks. It is curious to find that he never even caused to be issued an official manual for cavalry work. The system continued to be in detail that of the Republic, indeed that of 1788, with the additions and improvements unofficially added by the practical knowledge of the great cavalry generals of the Empire in the *Ordonnance Provisoire* of 1804.

XIII

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON AS PRIME MINISTER

I

WITH all their various faults and weaknesses, the prime ministers of the XIXth century were none of them destitute of capacity of sorts—though party historians have done their best to write down the practical abilities of Addington and Perceval, of Goderich and Aberdeen, and Lord John Russell. But eminence and capacity do not necessarily make a man a good prime minister. And it is curious to find that the greatest historical figure of the first half of the century, the victor of Waterloo, was on the whole the most unlucky adventurer in the paths of supreme governance that our political annals can show. If he had died a few years after the peace of 1815, he might have been called *felix opportunitate mortis*. No historian could have set limits to his possible career as the guardian of the British Empire and its old traditions. But alas! it was a case of *omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset* —all would have judged him capable of conducting the affairs of the State in the most admirable fashion; but unfortunately the responsibility came to him; he accepted it, not too willingly, and his record was most disappointing. He was a great man, a shrewd man, an honest and straightforward man, but his personal mentality, his political theories, and his conception of the duties of a prime minister, were each of them sufficient to render it certain that he would make a most disastrous experiment, if he tried to work that complicated machine, the British Cabinet system, in a time of exceptional storm and stress. To anyone who

has studied Wellington as a general, and toiled through the vast tomes of his military correspondence, it cannot be denied that a study of the somewhat smaller mass of his political correspondence, during the years that followed Waterloo, brings not only disappointment but surprise. The man was not a mere master of strategy and tactics, but a shrewd observer of everything that came under his eye, a good judge of character, possessed of a keen (if rarely displayed) sense of humour. Casual remarks and table talk show that he had a competent knowledge of history and even of literature. He could appreciate a telling classical quotation, while observing that his own classics were those of an Eton boy in the Remove; and he made occasional Shakespearian allusions. It is impossible to deal with his political aberrations as those of a mere old soldier, wandering about in worlds not realized, and making blunders from want of experience. It is too often forgotten that he had been in high ministerial office—as Secretary for Ireland—before ever he went out to Portugal in 1808, and had had much experience of politics (especially of their seedier side) while dealing with the place-hunters of Dublin —and of Westminster. He was not incapable of friendship, and could be kind and considerate when dealing with children, young people (such as schoolboys, aides-de-camp, and, most especially, young and charming ladies) and old personal dependents. And yet the record of his political life is one of a series of colossal errors, and the impression which he made on all save a very few of his contemporaries was that of a would-be autocrat, a bleak and frigid formalist, who could occasionally leave a scar that could never be forgotten, by some sardonic word or heartless act.

Perhaps this should have been expected by those who had studied his military career. There never was a successful general, save perhaps Frederick the Great, who was so little loved and idolized by the troops whom he had led to innumerable victories. "The sight of his long nose among us on a battle morning was worth 10,000 men, any day

of the week", wrote one of his veterans. But though he was feared and respected he was never loved. Or, as a contemporary puts it, "I know that it has been said that Wellington was not what may be called popular; still the troops possessed great confidence in him; nor did I ever hear a single individual express an opinion to the contrary". The greatest soldier of his age was not popular with the officers and men of his victorious army—and why? Because he did nothing to earn their love; he looked upon them as admirable tools for the task that had been set him, and he took immense pains to see that those tools were kept in good order—his assiduous attention to their food, pay, and clothing contrasted strongly with Napoleon's haphazard methods. But he was a hard master, sparing of praise, lavish with censure, often brusque to the edge of brutality with officers. Of the rank and file he said words that can never be pardoned: "They are the scum of the earth—English soldiers are fellows who have enlisted for drink—that is the plain fact, they have *all* enlisted for drink." For any notion of appealing to the men's better feelings, or swaying them by sentiment, he expressed supreme contempt. "I have no idea of any great effect being produced on British soldiers", he once said before a Royal Commission, "by anything but the fear of immediate corporal punishment"! When Queen Victoria, then quite a girl, expressed her wish to review her Guards, he discouraged the proposal—"As to the soldiers, I know them, they won't care about it one sixpence. It is a childish fancy because she has read about Queen Elizabeth at Tilbury"!

The same thing happened with his political subordinates in after-life. Wellington was suspicious, autocratic, sparing of thanks, ruthless in administering snubs and rebukes, possessed of a very long memory for offences, and a very short memory for services. He broke with old political friends (if friends they could be called) in the same callous fashion with which he broke with his own relatives. Every one will remember how he boycotted for nearly twenty

years his own brother, Lord Wellesley, the great Viceroy of India, who had given him his first step in the ladder of promotion—the cause of rupture being a purely political difference of opinion. If he had any true friends at all they were either mere personal dependents and satellites, such as Arbuthnot, Croker, or Gurwood, or Gleig, or Alava, or young people of his own entourage, to whom he could play the part of Nestor, or of the benevolent uncle of comedy, such as Lord Stanhope. For those who might have been considered his contemporaries and his equals he had never any real tie of affection.

The reason of this was, as a trenchant critic observed, that the Duke had an intellectual contempt for his social equals, and a social contempt for his intellectual equals. This sounds like a hard saying, but is roughly true. He looked down from the height of his intellectual superiority on the docile peers who followed his odd political changes with puzzled obedience, and grew testy when they persisted in trying to think for themselves on occasion. He acknowledged that "party management"—the art of suffering fools gladly—was not his strong point. In a passing moment of self-recognition he once observed: "When the Duke of Newcastle addressed me a letter on the subject of forming an Administration, I treated him with contempt. No man *likes* to be treated with contempt. I was wrong." But such moments of insight came rarely. The Duke was utterly careless of the *amour propre* of his subordinates. Imagine the feelings of a Marquis, holding a very high official position, on receiving an important document with the endorsement: "This is for your personal information: I do not want any observation or suggestions on it." Why add the last half-sentence? The topic discussed was entirely within the scope of the Marquis's sphere of duty. Undoubtedly Wellington was justified in believing that his intellectual powers were superior to those of most of his subordinates—but there was no reason to let them see that he thought so.

This was unwise and tactless. Far more unhappy, how-

ever, was his ill-concealed consciousness of social superiority towards intellectual equals. Like Lord Byron he was never able to forget that he was, what he once spoke of himself as being, a "sprig of the nobility". He had a profound distrust of "new men", and he looked upon people like Canning or Huskisson as strange leaders for the old aristocratic party. I doubt if he ever forgot that even Sir Robert Peel was but the son of a wholesale manufacturer. Canning was certainly to him an adventurer, of doubtful gentility, who "showed avowed hostility to the landed aristocracy of this country". Occasionally this class-feeling flashed out in words which even the admiring Gleig cannot but call "lacking in delicacy", as when in the presence of his whole staff he taunted an unfortunate major of Engineers with being the son of a duke's butler. But this distressing story should be read *in extenso* in the narrative of the worthy Chaplain-General. A comment on it is another *obiter dictum*, viz. that he could never like officers promoted from the ranks: "their fault always was not being able to resist drink—their low origin then came out, and you never could perfectly trust them, and I have *never* known an officer raised from the ranks turn out well, nor the system answer". This unhappy contempt (I can use no other word), intellectual and social, for those with whom he had to work, great and small, would not have been fatal to Wellington's power as a statesman if he had been more tactful, or as he would have called it, more hypocritical. But his honesty hindered: as he once observed he "hated humbug", and would never flatter, cajole, or conciliate. His honesty was of the form that ran over the edge of brusqueness into occasional brutality. When his devoted adherent Croker wrote to him, in great agony of mind, a four-sided letter setting forth his reasons for resigning his seat in Parliament, after the passing of the Reform Bill, the Duke replied in four lines: "I have received your letter. I am very sorry that you do not intend to be again elected to serve in Parliament. I cannot conceive for what reason." This, when Croker had given

him four pages of laboured reasons, could only mean that Wellington regarded these reasons as absurd and unworthy of notice. But even granting this, we must allow that in view of Croker's past services to the cause and the Duke's own person, a few sympathetic words were required. And this omission of the obvious did not come from a dislike to penning long letters. Wellington was the most prolix of correspondents, and would write several pages to advertising doctors who offered him their medicines, or to ladies who sent him trumpery presents. It is true that in inditing such replies he had the opportunity of employing his mordant power of satire. To one doctor he wrote: "As I am attended by the best medical advisers in England, I cannot make use of salves sent me by a gentleman (however respectable) of whom I know nothing, and who knows nothing of my case but what he has read in the newspapers." The letter to the officious lady ends with: "The Duke desires Miss Fiffe to inform him in what manner her box may be returned to Edinburgh. He gives notice that if he does not receive an answer by return of post, the box and its contents will be thrown into the fire." Wellington, obviously, did not understand the use of the waste-paper basket, in dealing with bores and pushing people. He had a high sense of his own dignity—but this was not the way to protect it.

II

As to the art of Cabinet government and the perversity of political colleagues, the Duke has left a very amusing *obiter dictum*, which may be found in the diary of Lady Salisbury, for many years one of the two women with whom he condescended to talk politics. "One man in the Cabinet wants one thing, and one another: they agree to what I may say in the morning, and then in the evening up they start with some crotchet which deranges the whole plan. I have not been used to that in the earlier part of my life. I have been accustomed to carry on things in

quite a different way. I assembled my officers and laid down my plan, and it was carried into effect without any more words." In short, the Duke's conception of the organization of a Cabinet was that the prime minister should give orders, and the rest should obey them without discussion. It is curious to note that many years before, as far back as 1812, when his brother, Wellesley, threw up his position in Lord Liverpool's Cabinet because his proposals were often overruled, Wellington wrote to him in sympathetic terms that "the republic of a cabinet is but little suited to any man of taste or of large views". At that same crisis Liverpool had thought well to explain to Wellington what he, as a prime minister, considered to be the working of a Cabinet. "Lord Wellesley says that he has not the weight in the Government that he expected when he accepted office. But government through a Cabinet is necessarily *inter pares*, in which each member must expect to have his opinions and his dispatches canvassed. And their previous friendly canvass of opinions and measures appears necessary, under a Constitution where all public acts of ministers will be hostilely debated in Parliament."

It is easy to see why Lord Liverpool held the premiership for fifteen continuous years, and why Wellington smashed up his Cabinet and his party in three. No body of ministers will consent for long to have their policy dictated to them in the form of military orders, criticism of which is regarded as insubordination, if not as mutiny. More especially will this be the case when the prime minister suddenly makes a *volte-face* in policy, and takes up measures which his colleagues regard as contravening the fundamental creed of their party. Such was the fate of Sir Robert Peel and of Mr. Gladstone in later years. But I think that even Mr. Gladstone, who was a man obstinately convinced of the righteousness of his own most unexpected and inexplicable mental processes, was less shocked and less surprised at the conduct of his colleagues than was Wellington under similar conditions. "What's the meaning of a party

if they don't follow their leaders?" he exclaimed to Lord Salisbury. "Damn 'em: let them go." He was not the man who could talk or think of "educating his party". Conscious of his own great ability, still more conscious of the want of ability in the great mass of his supporters, he thought that they owed him military obedience—"theirs not to reason why". Like Mr. Gilbert's soldier in *Iolanthe*, he felt that the sight of a group of dull M.P.s in close proximity, each one trying to think for himself, was enough to disturb any man's equanimity. His ideal colleague would have been Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., in another of Mr. Gilbert's immortal works:

> Who always voted at his party's call,
> And never thought of thinking for himself at all.

What an ideal First Lord of the Admiralty for a Wellington Cabinet! But the Duke might perhaps have objected to what he would have called the vulgar origins of a petti-fogging attorney.

III

Wellington accepted the position of Prime Minister, after Canning had been worried to his grave in 1827, as the avowed leader of the Tory party. Unfortunately the Tory party was rent by ill-concealed dissensions between the bulk of its members, who were still in the state of mentality caused by the twenty-odd years of the great war with France, and the minority, who thought that the times of political stagnation should come to an end, and that improvements of various kinds might be made in the details, though not in the fundamentals, of the Constitution. To both sections Wellington was at first the *deus ex machina* whose ripe wisdom and tried ability would guide the State out of the difficulties which had been obvious for so many recent years. To people like Lord Eldon, or Lord Sidmouth, to the majority of the House of Lords, the Duke appeared destined to vindicate the old Tory creed with all the

prestige of his dominating personality and his unrivalled reputation. I suppose that it was, in effect, inevitable that he should offend one or other of these sections. To have kept both Canningites and admirers of Lord Eldon and the Duke of Cumberland in his Cabinet would have required talents of management surpassing even those of Lord Liverpool. The misfortune of Wellington was that he continued to irritate both factions, and to be accused by each of inconsistency, and perverse illogical autocracy. When he passed his Catholic Relief Bill, the old Protestant Church-and-State party regarded him as a traitor to the Altar and the Crown. When he definitely rejected all proposals for Parliamentary Reform, and directed the House of Lords to throw out Lord Grey's first Reform Bill in October 1831, the Tories who believed in the necessity of some sort of a change in the national representation, the "waverers" as he called them, naturally concluded that he was what we should now call a "die-hard", or a "last ditcher". And yet in May 1832 he was found endeavouring to patch up a Cabinet which would engage to pass a Reform Bill of his own, guaranteed to be liberal rather than "moderate"—though six months before he had declared in very solemn phrases that the present state of the constitution of the House of Commons was ideal, and that it could not be improved or rendered more satisfactory than it was in 1831. To the old Tories his dealings with the Catholic Relief Bill looked like cynical opportunism. Not only to old Tories, but to Canningites also, his proposal to pass a Reform Bill in 1832 appeared not only inappropriate but immoral. Sir Robert Peel put on paper the statement that he considered that to take any part in producing such a Bill would be a personal degradation to himself—it would be to assume responsibility for changes which he had declared a hundred times over to be dangerous and revolutionary.

Yet Wellington was undoubtedly neither an opportunist, ready to change his policy in any way that would keep him in office, nor a deliberate hypocrite, nor a man des-

titute of any real political creed. He was simply one who honestly believed that he and his personality were the only things that stood between Great Britain and anarchical revolution. Not that he thought that Lord Grey or Lord Melbourne, or even Lord Brougham, were themselves Jacobins, or deliberately resolved to ruin their country, but that he was under the impression that they were recklessly opening the flood-gates through which the inundation must come, to sweep them and all Whigs as well as all Tories to destruction. Hence it was his duty to keep them out of office, even if it had to be done by fighting a series of rear-guard actions, by defending each outlying position, and retiring to the next when his flank was turned or his centre driven in. The acts which imposed disabilities on Catholics were an untenable outwork, as he concluded. If it were no longer possible to maintain it, he had better evacuate it himself, rather than endure a ruinous defeat in defending it. The constitution of the unreformed Parliament was a much more important item in his system of fortification against Jacobinism; but if it had to be sacrificed, it was better that the details of the retreat should be settled by himself, rather than by the enemy.

IV

The underlying idea which was at the base of all Wellington's conceptions as to the state of the realm during the years of his political activity, was that revolution was possible—very possible—in England, if things were suffered to drift, and mere Whig parliamentarians, working for their party ends, were allowed to get hold of the helm of the State. Looking back at the troubles of 1820–37 across the long and tranquil reign of Queen Victoria, we find it hard to realize the mental outlook of many intelligent people, who believed in all honesty that "red ruin and the breaking up of laws" were at hand, and that any and every means —from the use of the bayonet to the abandonment of one's

own cherished political views—might have to be used to avert impending chaos. But let us remember some of our own misgivings during the General Strike of May 1926. To regard the Tories of the post-war period 1815–32 as besotted alarmists is to do them wrong. There was much to justify their view of the state of affairs. They recalled, as a memory of their early youth, the state of London during the Gordon Riots. When they were grown men they had seen the Irish Rebellion of 1798, the mutinies of the Nore and Spithead, and the murderous if futile plot of Colonel Despard, the first revolutionary who invented the notion of a "soviet of soldiers and workmen"—for this was precisely Despard's scheme of organization. Though Great Britain had experienced no revolution in the French style, she had seen intermittent riot, sedition, and outrage, all through the first twenty years of the nineteenth century. In the lean days after Waterloo things had been worse than ever—as witness Peterloo and the Six Acts. I imagine that, though he seldom talked about it, the Duke had not forgotten that he had been within a measurable distance of assassination, when Arthur Thistlewood's desperadoes planned their raid upon the Cabinet dinner at Lord Harrowby's house in Grosvenor Square. If one takes the trouble to wade through lists of forgotten incidents, whose record is preserved only in *Annual Registers* or contemporary political pamphlets, one ceases to regard the views of Wellington and Peel, or even those of Lord Eldon and Lord Sidmouth, with the pitying contempt bestowed upon them by the Liberal historians of the next generation.

Wellington, it must be confessed, had this obsession in the strongest form. In one curious letter he wrote that he had spent the better part of his life not merely in war, but in civil war. He was under the impression that the passing of the Reform Bill would lead to "revolution", with massacres like those of Paris in 1792–3 thrown in. Even after the Bill had been passed, and the new Parliament was sitting, he expressed his views that the first stage of the movement was over, but that democracy in its worst

form having been introduced, the destruction of the monarchy and the Constitution could not be long delayed. "The change in the position of the country may be gradual, it may be effected without civil war, and may occasion as little sudden destruction of private property as possible —but future changes will go on *ad nauseam*—a shame and disgrace to the public men of this day." This was written as late as 1835. He sometimes envisaged the possible details of the English revolution, and allowed that if it became sufficiently wild and dangerous, he might be driven to take up the position of a military dictator. At least this is the only rational meaning that I can attach to one observation to the effect that if the worse came to the worst the man should not be wanting. "My opinion is that a democracy once set going must sooner or later work itself out in anarchy", he said, "and that some sort of despotism must then come to restore society." From the very drastic and complete military arrangements which he made when preparing to face the Chartists, on the day of their proposed march on Westminster, I do not doubt that if Wellington had been in office, as Prime Minister or Commander-in-Chief, and faced by an open outbreak of organized insurrection, he would have suppressed it most effectively, with or without much bloodshed. But if he were not in office his scrupulous regard for legality would have made it almost certain that he would not resort to force, except in the single case of an actual attack on the Crown—in such case his loyalty would have overruled his legality. In the crisis of 1831–2 some Tories proposed to found "counter-associations", "constitutional leagues"—practically what we should now call clubs of "Fascisti". Even Sir Robert Peel dallied with the idea—"if the supporters of the Government are allowed to organize armed clubs for the purpose of attack—the only safety is in preparation for defence. I certainly, if necessity arises, shall form, and counsel others to form, quiet unostentatious associations for the purpose of self-defence against unprovoked aggression". The Duke pondered the matter, and finally refused

to authorize the foundation of such societies: his point of view was that there was a Government in power responsible to the King: to use force, or threats of force, against such a Government, so long as it was legally constituted, was not permissible to the party which called itself the representative of order and legality. Yet Wellington believed that Lord Grey was letting loose the "red spectre"; that whatever the Whigs might intend, they would be swept away by forces which they could not control, and that "the Revolution would devour its own children", as in the France of the Girondins and the Jacobins. But only when the King and the Two Houses should be attacked by open violence would it be permissible for private persons to intervene in arms.

V

It must be confessed that the Duke went very near to provoking the crisis which he dreaded, when in May 1832, after the rejection of the Reform Bill by the House of Lords, he prepared to take office once more as the head of a Tory administration. Fortunately his chosen colleagues would not back him, and the scheme came to nought. But if he had actually assumed the reins of power, as the King's minister, it is pretty certain that widespread disorder, to which the Bristol Riots would have been a trifle, would have broken out all over the realm. And if such outbreaks had occurred, it is equally certain that Wellington would have thought it his duty to use armed force against them in a ruthless and effective fashion. He would have deplored the necessity, but it would have been his duty to protect the Crown and the Constitution. That on assuming office he intended to bring forward a Reform Bill of his own would have gone for nothing. His public condemnation of any sort of change in the House of Commons had been so violent and so frequent, that it would have been considered a piece of cynical hypocrisy if he had professed his intention to bring in a "moderate" or a "liberal" Reform

Bill of his own. His resumption of office would have been ascribed to mere love of power and place; his Bill would inevitably have been called a solemn sham. Sir Robert Peel was wiser than his chief, when he refused to touch the scheme, declaring that to pass Reform Bills was the proper business of the Whigs, and that it would amount to political immorality for Tories to bring in legislation which they regarded as dangerous and destructive. This Wellington could not, or would not, see. His odd reply was that he should be ashamed to show his face in the streets if he had failed to do his best to serve the King in a moment of emergency. The humour of the situation was that the King was at the moment anything but anxious to be served in this particular way, though he had been forced to apply to Wellington when Lord Grey tendered his resignation.

Wellington's formal justification for his curious policy was that he was, as he phrased it, "the retained servant of the Sovereign of this Empire", the sworn and salaried employé of the Crown. As a loyal subordinate it was his duty to do his best for his employer, according to his lights, however distasteful and even humiliating such service might be. "The King's Government must be carried on *somehow*" was another of his dicta, and believing as he did that the advent of the Whig party to office would lead to general ruin in the near future, it was his duty to keep them out of power, or to check (so far as he could) their attempts to hack away what he considered essential parts of the Constitution. All his duty was to the Crown—even when the Crown was worn by George IV.

VI

But the personality of the Sovereign under whom the first two years of his ministry were spent was one of his greatest difficulties. There can seldom have been two men whose mentalities were more offensive to each other than George IV and Wellington. The King was selfish, thriftless,

idle, ostentatious, pleasure-loving, capable of any trick or evasion; yet extremely clever withal, an actor of talent, full of amusing conversation, capable when he chose of managing a negotiation as well as the most unscrupulous diplomatist, a fascinating host, if a most unreliable friend. He spent his life in finding plausible excuses for shirking unpleasant duties, but discharged pleasant ones with brilliant success and undeniable tact. The Duke was unostentatious, even ascetic; he had a perfect genius for bleak discomfort in the conduct of his private life. He was obsessed, even beyond the bounds of wisdom, by the desire to carry out every formal duty in the most complete fashion. The amount of prolix and often unnecessary private letters which he wrote causes wonder; he got up every morning at five o'clock to deal with them. The King was seldom dressed by noon, but when he did dress it was a triumph. Wellington hated full-dress uniform—he fought the whole Peninsular War in a grey frock-coat and a plumeless cocked hat, and only brought out his decorations —he had an inconvenient bushel of them—for very great occasions. The King was a gourmet: the Duke did not care what he ate. In 1814 he once dined at Paris with the Arch-Chancellor Cambacérès, the greatest epicure of France. Cambacérès watched the Duke working through his dinner with obvious want of appreciation of its excellence. At last he called his attention to a dish on which special talent had been employed—was it not attractive? "Oh yes," replied Wellington, "quite good—but I never notice what I eat." "*Mon Dieu,*" exclaimed the ex-Chancellor, "and you come here to dine with *me*!" In his old age the Duke was so neglectful of his meals that he sometimes fell in a fainting fit from having forgotten how long it was since he last tasted food. When he got into official converse with his Sovereign, the difficulty was to keep King George to the point—if the point was one on which he did not want to be pressed. He was a lively conversationalist, and adroit at getting away from distasteful topics. Wellington, as he said himself, had "no small talk", and had to be harking

back to the question of the moment in spite of the discursiveness of a master whose frivolity was a terrible trial to him. It is on record that on his first appearance as prime minister the King did everything that could revolt his stiff and formal servant. George was found in bed, in a dirty silk dressing-gown and a turban night-cap, but in high good humour. "Arthur," he chuckled, "the late Cabinet is defunct", and then proceeded to give a ludicrous dramatic rendering of the behaviour of the various members of the Goderich administration, at their final interview with him to give up their seals of office, mimicking the peculiarities of each with much accuracy and animation. Wellington did not like mumming, and he did not like dirty dressing-gowns. I do not think that he liked being called "Arthur", and he regarded this moment as the most serious in his life, when he was called to an arduous situation, and what he considered a very disagreeable duty. His feelings may be easily imagined.

Loyalty to the Crown turned out to be a very odd business, when the Crown was worn by George IV. It often consisted in what His Majesty called "bullying", i.e. in compelling him by steady and constant pressure to do things which he did not like. Considering the thorough knowledge of the King's mentality which he possessed, the Duke was particularly irritated when his master took up the line of resistance called "conscientious objection". This was employed all through the time of the Catholic Relief Bill. The King kept impressing on the Duke that he was afraid that his coronation oath and his religious scruples forbade him to give his Royal assent to the Act. This method had been tried by George III on William Pitt with complete success: every one *did* know that the elder King possessed a conscience, and a very obstinate one. But the exhibition of an active Protestant conscience by George IV was not a convincing move. "I make it a rule", said Wellington, "never to interrupt him, and when he turns the conversation and tries to get rid of the subject, I let him talk himself out, and then quietly put before

him again the matter in question, so that he cannot escape from it!" On February 1, 1829, George IV signed the draft of the King's Speech which committed him to Catholic Relief: on March 3rd he suddenly revived his scruples and protested that he had been misled and deceived. The ministers offered to resign—nay, did so, after a very distressing and emotional interview. The Cabinet thought that all was over: but Wellington had made out that His Majesty was only bluffing. "Don't be afraid", he said; "before to-morrow morning, depend upon it, I shall hear from the King again." And so it was, the bluff having been called. Before he got to bed that night Wellington received a five-line note from Windsor. "God knows what pain it costs me to write these words: under the circumstances you have my consent to proceed with the measure." And this was what the Duke called serving the Crown.

VII

It must be confessed that if the King's political views, or alleged views, were sometimes surprising, the Duke's expressed opinions occasionally seem astounding to us, looking back as we do over the long Victorian régime that intervenes between our day and his. Some of the things which he defended were indefensible—he spoke out fearlessly on behalf of Rotten Boroughs. "I confess that I see in the members for the thirty Rotten Boroughs men who would preserve the state of property as it is, who would maintain by their votes the Church of England, the Union with Scotland and Ireland, our colonies and possessions, our national honour. I think that it is the presence in Parliament of this sort of man, with the county gentlemen and bankers and great manufacturers, that makes the House of Commons differ from a Foreign Chamber of Deputies. It is by means of the representation of those close boroughs that the great proprietors of England participate in political power. We can't spare

these men, or exchange them for members elected by great towns under an extended franchise." Wellington once issued the gnome that *all* reform is bad and dangerous, because all reform ends by being Radical. He defended the Purchase System in the Army; the lavish use of corporal punishment. He disliked education, opposing at once staff colleges and army schoolmasters. He sometimes spoke of the good of the "landed interest", where we should speak of the good of the State. All this, I think, came directly or indirectly from the guiding theory which we spoke of before, the notion that the English Revolution was at hand, and that if he could not stop it, he could at any rate support any measure that pushed it into the less-immediate future.

That this was a melancholy outlook, and a depressing scheme of life, I think that Wellington himself would have agreed. The fear of revolution never left him, and in his extreme old age he thought, during the Chartist troubles of 1848, that it was once more growing imminent, and turned all that remained of his faculties to the task of devising a method for dealing with civil war in the streets of London. His plan was excellent, and would no doubt have been effective; but it was never tested. Indeed, we can see now that the danger was not what the men of that day expected it to be.

It is some consolation to the admirers of Wellington that he at least enjoyed a sort of Indian summer in his declining years: he lived to see his fears of immediate chaos, so acute in 1832, die away. He survived to see Conservative ministers in power, and a popular sovereign on the throne which in 1830 had seemed to totter. What probably affected less his Spartan set of mind was that he survived to find himself no longer the much-hated representative of Reaction and the enemy of the mob. He himself never forgot the broken windows of Apsley House: but the rest of the world did; and he figured in the memory of the generation that had grown up since Reform Bill times as a sort of historical monument, absolutely straight and true to type. He knew what was expected of him:

"I am the Duke of Wellington, and must do as the Duke of Wellington doth", was one of his touches of sardonic humour. But it was also one more indication of the fact that he regarded an inflexible adherence to his own peculiar code of duty as the highest obligation.

> But above all, to thine own self be true,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man.

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